

PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
**14th ANNUAL
CONFERENCE. CONVENTION
OF**
**THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY
OF AMERICA**

*dedicated to
"Hazzanut and its Development
in America"*

**MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY, APRIL 17TH-20TH, 1961
AT GROSSINGER'S, LIBERTY, NEW YORK**

THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

July Ist, 1960 to June 30, 1961

OFFICERS

Isaac I. Wall, President Pinchas Spiro, ***Recording Secretary***
Moses J. Silverman, ***Vice President*** Moshe Nathanson, ***Treasurer***
Samuel Rosenbaum, ***Executive Vice President***

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Ex-OFFICIO

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Nathan Mendelson Charles Sudock
David J. Puttermann Max Wohlberg

NATIONAL COUNCIL

P R O C E E D I N G S

O F T H E

14 th ANNUAL

CONFERENCE- CONVENTION

O F

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Prepared for Publication by **HAZZAN SAMUEL ROSENBAUM**
Assisted by **HAZZAN ALBERT SCHINDLER**

14th Annual Convention

MONDAY THROUGH THURSDAY
APRIL 17TH-20TH, 1961

dedicated to
**"Hazzanut and its Development
in America."**

**GROSSINGER'S
LIBERTY, NEW YORK**

Welcome

to the 14th Annual Convention of the Cantors Assembly of America.

Once again we have the unique opportunity to spend a few days together in fellowship, study and discussion.

The Convention program is an attempt to utilize the time at our disposal so that when it is over each colleague will have a deeper understanding of his profession and of the role which the cantorate can play in the ever developing American Jewish community.

We are especially proud that this Convention will mark the appearance of fifteen newly commissioned compositions, the contribution of the Cantors Assembly of America to the storehouse of Jewish melos.

It is our hope that colleagues as well as friends of the Cantors Assembly will grasp every opportunity to participate in the sessions. Only in that way can the real purpose of this Convention be fulfilled.

With every wish for an enjoyable and rewarding Convention,

MONDAY, APRIL 17, 1961

3:00 P.M.	REGISTRATION <i>Convention Desk, Registration Lobby</i>
3:00 P.M.	MUSIC EXHIBIT <i>Terrace Room</i> Display of Jewish Music by leading Publishers. Exhibit will be open until 5:30.
3:30 P.M.	ANNUAL MEETING Suite A EXECUTIVE AND NATIONAL COUNCILS OF THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA
5:15 P.M.	MINHAH SERVICE <i>Suits A</i> Officiating: HAZZAN HARRY BROCKMAN <i>Congregation Shaare Torah Brooklyn, New York</i>
6:30 P.M.	MA'ARIV SERVICE <i>Terrace Room</i> Officiating: HAZZAN JOSHUA LIND <i>Hyde Park Hebrew Center Chicago, Illinois</i>
	INDUCTION OF NEW MEMBERS HAZZAN YEHUDAH MANDEL Membership Committee <i>Jewish Communal Center of Flatbush Brooklyn, New York</i>
	*NEW MEMBERS SHABTAI ACKERMAN , Detroit, Michigan DAVID APTOWITZER , Ontario, Canada RUBEN ERLBAUM , Oak Park, Michigan MILTON S. FOREMAN , Chicago, Illinois REUVEN FRANKEL , Detroit, Michigan WILLIAM HAUBEN , Los Angeles, California DAVID J. KANE , Monterey Park, California CHARLES LEW , Medford Mass. MOSHE PURJES , Philadelphia, Pa. ISRAEL TABATSKY , Providence, Rhode Island DAVID WEINTRAUB , Flushing, N. Y. ISRAEL ZIMMERMAN , Lincoln, Nebraska

**List Incomplete*

THE CONVENTION COMMITTEE

7:30 P.M. **OPENING BANQUET**

Dining Room Chairman:
HAZZAN SAUL MEISELS

*Chairman, Convention Planning Committee
Temple on the Height8
Cleveland, Ohio*

Welcome :
HAZZAN HARRY WEINBERG
*Chairman, Convention
Management Committee
Overbrook Park Congregation
Philadelphia, Pa.*

Havah Nashir :
HAZZAN SHOLOM NELSON
*Congregation Israel Center of
Hillcrest Manor
Flushing, New York*

Sefirat Ha-omer and Birkat Hamazon:
HAZZAN JACOB SONENKLAR
*Congregation Shaarei Zedek
Detroit, Michigan*

ADDRESS:
"What Path for Conservative Tradition?"
RABBI EDWARD SANDROW
*President, Rabbinical Assembly of America
Temple Beth El,
Cedarhurst, L. I., New York*

10:00 P.M.

Playhouse CONCERT OF JEWISH MUSIC

*Featuring
HAZZAN EUGENE GOLDBERGER
Adath Israel
Montreal, Canada*

HAZZAN SAUL HAMMERMAN
*Beth El Congregation
Baltimore, Maryland*

HAZZAN MORRIS LEVINSON
*Temple Keser Israel
New Haven, Conn.*

MR. SIDOR BELARSKY
Bass-Baritone

MISS PHYLISS BRAUN
*Soprano
Cleveland, Ohio*

HAZZAN CHARLES DAVIDSON
*Wantagh Jewish Center
Wantagh, New York*

with
THE WANTAGH JEWISH CENTER CHORUS
MRS. CHARLES DAVIDSON, Conductor

and the
DEBORAH ZALL DANCE GROUP

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1961

8:15 A.M. SHAHARIT SERVICE

Terrace Room Officiating:
HAZZAN SIMON BERMANIS
*Ahavas Achim
Detroit, Mich.*

D'var Torah :
RABBI MILTON ARM
*Ahavas Achim
Detroit, Mich.*

9:00 A.M. **BREAKFAST**

Dining Room *Music Exhibit open from 9 until 10:15 A.M.*

10:30 A.M. **MORNING SESSION**

Terrace Room Chairman :
HAZZAN GEORGE WAGNER
*Congregation Beth Yeshurun
Houston, Texas*

A COMPOSERS FORUM

**"CREATING SYNAGOGUE MUSIC
FOR AMERICA**

Leader
Da. A. W. BINDER
New York City

Discussants :
HAZZAN GERSHON EPHROS
New York City

MR. HERBERT FROMM
Brookline, Mass.

MR. SHOLOM SECUNDA
New York City
General Discussion

1:00 P.M. **LUNCHEON**

Dining Room Birkat Hamazon :
HAZZAN VICTOR JACOBY
*Baldwin Jewish Center
Baldwin, New York*

Music Exhibit open from 1 until 2:15 P.M.

**2:30 P.M. FOURTEENTH ANNUAL
Room Terrace MEETING CANTORS ASSEMBLY
OF AMERICA**

Executive session for members and wives.

Chairman:

HAZZAN ISAAC WALL
*President, Cantors Assembly of America
Har Zion Temple
Philadelphia, Pa.*

Secretary :

HAZZAN PINCHAS SPIRO
*Recording Secretary
Mt. Airy Congregation
Philadelphia, Pa.*

REPORTS:

(Included in Kits)

REGIONAL BRANCHES :

West Coast
New England
Philadelphia
Chicago
Connecticut
Tri- State
Metropolitan
Central Seaboard
New York State
Florida
Canada

COMMITTEES:

Convention
Membership
Publications

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT**

HAZZAN SAMUEL ROSENBAUM
*Temple Beth El
Rochester, New York*

**REPORT OF THE NOMINATIONS
COMMITTEE**

HAZZAN WILLIAM BELSKIN-GINSBURG
*Chairman
Philadelphia, Pa.*

**ELECTION OF OFFICERS
AND EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

GENERAL DISCUSSION

5:15 P.M. MINHAH SERVICE

Terrace Room **Officiating :**

HAZZAN MORTON KULA
*Temple Beth Sholom
Roslyn Heights, New York*

6:30 P.M. MA'ARIV SERVICE

Terrace Room **Officiating:**
HAZZAN ABRAHAM DENBURG
*Beth El Congregation
Akron, Ohio*

INSTALLATION OF OFFICERS

Participating:
HAZZAN ISAAC WALL
HAZZAN NATHAN MENDELSON

THE PRESIDENT'S BANQUET

Chairman :
HAZZAN WILLIAM BELSKIN-GINSBURG
Philadelphia, Pa.

Havah Nashir :
HAZZAN HENRY WAHRMAN
*Beth Shalom Synagogue
Toronto, Canada*

Sefirat Ha-omer and Birkat Hamazon:
HAZZAN DAVID LEON
*Rodef Sholom
Bridgeport, Conn.*

THE CAMPAIGN AWARD

Presented to:
HAZZAN MOSES J. SILVERMAN
*Anshe Emet Synagogue
Chicago, Illinois*

Presented by:
RABBI DAVID KOGAN
Director, Cantors Institute

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE
HAZZAN ISAAC WALL

10:00 P.M.

Playhouse

CONCERT :

**"MUSIC FOR THE SYNAGOGUE
FOR OUR TIME"**

**PREMIERE PERFORMANCE OF
WORKS NEWLY COMMISSIONED BY
THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY OF
AMERICA**

Participants :
HAZZAN BEN BELFER
*Temple B'nai Sholom
Rockville Center, New York*

HAZZAN PHILLIP BLACKMAN
*Beth El Synagogue
Philadelphia, Pa.*

HAZZAN SAMUEL DUBROW
*Temple Beth El
Cedarhurst, New York*

HAZZAN ISAAC GOODFRIEND
*Community Temple
Cleveland, Ohio*

HAZZAN ARTHUR KORET
*Emanuel Synagogue
Hartford, Conn.*

HAZZAN DAVID OSEN
*Teeaneck Jewish Center
Teeaneck, New Jersey*

THE SYNAGOGUE CHORUS
LAZAR WEINER, *Conductor*
ROCHELLE ROTHPEARL, *Piano*

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1961

8:15 A.M. **SHAHARIT SERVICE**

Terrace Room
Officiating:
HAZZAN PINCHAS SPIRO
Mt. Airy Congregation
Philadelphia, Pa.

D'var Torah:
RABBI DAVID KOGEN
Director, Cantor8 Institute

9:00 A.M. **BREAKFAST**

Dining Room
Music Exhibit open from 9:00 until 10:15 A.M.

10:30 A.M. **"HOW SHALL WE PRAY TODAY"**

Tewace Room
MAKING THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP
MEANINGFUL FOR OUR TIME

Chairman:
HAZZAN BEN JAMIN SIEGEL
Temple Israel
Great Neck, New York

Liturgy:
RABBI HERMAN KIEVAL
Temple Israel
Albany, New York

Music:
HAZZAN NATHAN MENDELSON
Shaar Hashamayim
Montreal, Canada

The Worshipper:
MR. JOEL SCHENKER
Temple Beth El
Cedarhurst, New York

1:00 P.M. **LUNCHEON**

Dining Room
Birkat Hamazon:
HAZZAN SIDNEY RABINOWITZ
Temple Shomrei Emunah
Montclair, New Jersey

Music Exhibit open from 1 until 2:15 P.M.

2:30 P.M. **"THE AMERICAN HAZZAN :
A SELF-STUDY"**

Executive Session for members and wives.

Chairman:
HAZZAN CHARLES DAVIDSON
Wantagh Jewish Center
Wantagh, Long Island New York

REPORT ON A NEW SURVEY
CONDUCTED BY THE
CANTORS ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

Presented by:
HAZZAN SAMUEL ROSENBAUM
Temple Beth El
Rochester, New York
HAZZAN ROBERT ZALKIN
Niles Township Jewish Congregation
Skokie, Illinois

"USING OUR KNOWLEDGE "

General Discussion of the Report and
current issues in Hazzanut

5:00 P.M. **MINHAH SERVICE**

Terrace Room
Officiating:
HAZZAN SOL MENDELSON
East End Synagogue of Long Beach
Long Beach, New York

6:30 P.M. **MA'ARIV SERVICE**

Officiating:
HAZZAN MORDECAI HEISER
Congregation B'nai Israel
Pittsburgh, Pa.

YIZKOR

memorial tributes to departed colleagues:
ISADOREADELSMAN **ADOLPH KATCHO**
BERNARD ALT **JOSEPH MANN**
WILLIAM H. CAESER **GERSON H. MARGOLIS**
JOSEF CYSNER **JACOB SCHWARTZ**
HARRY FREILICH **JACOB SIVAN**
JUDAH GOLDRING **MENDEL STAWISH**
ISRAEL HOROWITZ **ISAAC TRACER**
WILLIAM HOFSTADER **SOLOMON WINTER**

Psalm 121: Esa Enay-Ephros

Eulogy and Kadidsh:
HAZZAN MAX WOHLBERG
Malveme Jewish Center
Malverne, New York

El Moleh Rahamin:

HAZZAN SAMUEL POSTOLOW
Yeshiva of Bensonhurst
Brooklyn, New York

7:30 P.M. **CLOSING BANQUET**

Dining Room
Chairman:
HAZZAN SAMUEL ROSENBAUM
Executive Vice President, Cantors Assembly

Havah Nashir:
HAZZAN GREGOR SHELKAN
Temple Mishkan Tefila
Boston, Mass.

Sefirat Ha-omer and Birkat Hamazon:
HAZZAN PINCHAS SPIRO
Mt. Airy Jewish Center
Philadelphia, Pa.

PRESENTATION OF NEWLY
ELECTED OFFICERS

ADDRESS:

"The Besht and Hasidism"

DR. ISRAEL KNOX
Associate Professor of Philosophy,
New York University

10:00 P.M. **"MUSIC FOR THE SYNAGOGUE
Playhouse FROM THE EUROPEAN
TRADITION"**

Participating:

HAZZAN SHABTAI ACKERMAN
Congregation Beth Abraham
Detroit, Michigan

HAZZAN JOSEPH EIDELSON
East Midwood Jewish Center
Brooklyn, New York

H AZZAN SOLOMON GISSER
Shaare Zion
Montreal, Canada

HAZZAN MICHAL HAMMERMAN
Kehillat Israel
Brookline, Mass.

HAZZAN ALVIN SCHRAETER
Temple Petach Tikvah
Brooklyn, New York

HAZZAN HYMAN SKY
Congregation Beth Emeth
Philadelphia, Pa.

PHILADELPHIA REGIONAL CHORAL ENSEMBLE
SHALOM ALTMAN, Conductor
LAZAR WEINER, Piano

PRESENTATION OF **KAVOD AWARDS**

THURSDAY APRIL 20. 1961

8:15 A.M. SHAHARIT SERVICE

Terrace Room
Officiating:
HAZZAN ABRAHAM FRIEDMAN
Park Avenue Synagogue
New York City

D'var Torah :
RABBI HERMAN KIEVAL

BREAKFAST

Music Exhibit open all morning.

10:30 A.M. COMMITTEE MEETINGS

1:00 P.M. LUNCHEON : CLOSING SESSION

Birkat Hamazon:
HAZZAN KURT SILBERMANN
Jewish Community Center
Norristown, Pa.

Closing Prayer:
HAZZAN ABBA WEISGAL
Chizuk Amuna Congregation
Baltimore, Maryland

INDUCTION CEREMONY

Hazzan Pehuda Mandel, Membership Committee

Distinguished Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen:

In the absence of my honorable colleague David Brodsky, in behalf of the Executive Board and members of our Assembly, it is a distinct honor and privilege to welcome the new members into the ranks of the Cantors Assembly of America.

The men who stand before us at this momentous occasion came to join us since our last Convention. They have met the rigorous tests, complied with and fulfilled all qualifications required of members of this Assembly. *Hashem natan lahem ozen lishmoa v'lev navon lihaskil.*

These men are imbued with the spirit of dedication and enthused about their profession. God Almighty has blessed them with fine musical and general human qualifications so that they are able to harken, to discern to the word of God, to His Torah and its teachings. These men have learned to administer their sacred responsibility of their high offices held in their congregations, *as shlihey tzibbur ne-emanim il-amam vivlim'lakhtam hakdoshah* true emissaries of their people and their holy profession. Based on your qualifications and in accordance with the laws and regulations of our Assembly it is my privilege to receive and to induct you as full-fledged members and to accord you all rights and privileges held by *Hazzanim---shlihey tzibbur*, members of our great Assembly.

We would like you to be cognizant of the paramount importance of your profession in the life of your people and that the great privileges in turn entail great responsibilities. *Un'shalma parim s'fateynu.* You are called upon to open for your congregants the gates of communication with their Father In Heaven. You have the privilege to minister on the altar of Israel's faith. At the same time you have the responsibility to share their hopes, their sorrows, their aspirations and to bring on the wings of melody and song their prayers to the throne of God Almighty. You have the privilege to plead for and pray with your people, to be their companion on solemn and festive occasions, birth and marriage, but you will have to share their sorrow and bring solace and comfort to them in days of distress. Yours will be the single honor and privilege to make hazzanut beloved and revered in the eyes of God and Man.

It is for the first time in the history of our Assembly that the induction ceremony takes place in the Synagogue. This is maybe faith. It is our faith to fulfill most if our holy callings in and from the House of God. In this spirit let me therefore greet you with the ancient words of the Psalmist, Blessed Are You Who Come In The Name Of GOD. May You Be Blessed From The House Of GOD. May Our Father In Heaven Give You Willingness, *laasot r'txono b'levav shalem* to enhance and enrich the undertakings of our Assembly. May you be a source of blessing and through your work bring strength to our profession, to Israel and be a renewed vitality to Judaism and to all Mankind. Amen.

GREETINGS

Hazzan Harry Weinberg

Chairman, Convention Management Committee

It is my pleasure once again to welcome you to our 14th Annual Convention. Unlike so many Bar Mitzvah Boys who disappear from the Jewish scene after their *thirteenth* year we are here again doing business at the same old stand, and with the help of God we intend to continue with our efforts to achieve a meaningful and mature religiously oriented Jewish community.

At the beginning of our gathering it is fitting that I say a word in appreciation of the efforts of Hazzan Saul Meisels who has had the major share in planning the program of the Convention. He has worked with untiring zeal and dedicated devotion to see to it that our Convention this year shall be for all of us a fruitful and enjoyable occasion.

From this point on the success of this Convention depends more on you than it does of any committee chairman. By this I mean, that if we are to accomplish our Convention business, we must have your cooperation in meeting the various time schedules set up for all the functions. You are aware, of how compact our time arrangements are, with respect to the various sessions planned. If you are late and delay us, much that should be done will fall by the wayside for lack of time in which to do it. I therefore urge you most strongly to be aware of the time for each activity and to arrive promptly. I am sure we are all aware, of the annoyance which is ours, when in our Synagogue a Service starts late, and then we are told to hurry-it-up in order to meet the time deadline. If we will have consideration for our fellows who are working so hard to make this Convention meaningful and rewarding, I am sure we will all be better off. So, I ask you again to please cooperate with us and let's do it right.

And now I should like to introduce our head table to you. We are happy to have them with us, I am sure.

ADDRESS OF WELCOME

Hazzan Saul Meisels, Convention Chairman

As Chairman of this, the fourteenth convention of the Cantors Assembly of America, it is *my* great privilege and pleasure to extend to all of *you* — my colleagues, your wives, and guests of the convention — these words of greeting and welcome. Bruchim Habairn-May the Almighty bestow His blessings upon those assembled here, and grant that we may draw inspiration, wisdom and pleasure from our short stay here in these gracious surroundings.

Dear friends-we, the cantors of the conservative movement of America, have assembled here this week because we are, each one of us, vitally interested and concerned with the growth and development of chazzanut in America. All growth and development implies a feeling of change, a sense of aliveness, a feeling of looking at things from a fresh viewpoint and translat-

ing ideas into reality, changing one's habits and re-kindling one's tastes. But change alone is meaningless unless it brings with it growth, deeper understanding, and a greater reverence for that which is sacred and beautiful.

All of us are deeply aware of the ideological conflict going on today in the American Jewish community. There is a constant leveling of differences in religious practices, until it is often difficult to distinguish between member congregations of the Conservative United Synagogue or the modern Orthodox groups. We are witnessing now the emergence of a new "minhag America," or, religion as expressed in the American tradition.

Among our own ranks there are also differences of opinion. There are those who feel that our music, and its interpretation, should be ruled by traditions as laid down by the great hazzanim of former days. And there are others among us who feel that the modern techniques of the present-day composer find an answering chord in the heart of the present-day worshipper, whose changing tastes are conditioned by the various music he hears constantly about him. The programs at this convention, therefore, have been designed to answer for some of those questions which perplex us constantly:

1. What is the conservative tradition-and is there such a thing?
2. What kind of music should we sing congregationally?
3. What kind of music can we sing in concert?
4. What is the new music which is becoming the music of the future-how much of it is being fused with the accepted music of the European tradition?
5. What type of personality should the hazzan represent today-his cultural interests, his musical function within the synagogue?
6. What can one do when a congregation no longer understands the text, is completely unfamiliar with the traditional nusach, and is totally unimpressed with the complex musical creations of some of our modern composers?

To help us study these questions which concern us all so vitally, our congregation has carefully selected speakers and topics. Just as an overture brings promise of what is to follow, so let me enumerate a few of the highlights which will be offered us during these next sessions.

First, tonight, our speaker will discuss for us the American conservative tradition. I shall present him to you later, and therefore shall not elaborate further now. The first concert will be held tonight, immediately following the program here, and will be devoted to Jewish concert music. We shall have the unusual experience of hearing not only our own colleagues but two outstanding singers as well, one a soprano new to many here, Miss Phyllis Braun, and the other a singer of great renown beloved by all of us, our own Sidor Belarsky. Tonight, in addition, we will witness the presentation

of a sacred work composed by our colleague, Hazzan Charles Davidson, which will be sung by the choir of his synagogue, and danced to by a fine dance company, under the direction of Miss Debra Zall-a remarkable blending of modern dance and sacred music.

Tomorrow morning we shall present a Composers Forum. Several prominent composers of today will participate in a discussion of new music created for the American synagogue, and their attitudes concerning the old. Tuesday evening, after the message by our beloved president, Isaac Wall, we shall be treated to a truly historic event in the annals of the Cantors Assembly. For the first time in its history, the Assembly has commissioned fifteen composers of note to set to music specific texts which have not been interpreted anew for many years. We have assembled a choir of highly professional singers, under the skilled direction of Lazar Weiner, our convention resident pianist, to perform the choral music, and have selected seven of our own gifted colleagues as the hazzanim-soloists. All of this music has already been printed by the Cantors Assembly, and will be available at the Music Exhibit which will be open daily. This represents a milestone in our history, to which we point with pride, and I want to take this opportunity of expressing our deep gratitude to all those who have made it possible-the composers who created the new settings, the officers and executive of the Cantors Assembly for their vision and encouragement in sponsoring this project, and to Mills Music Corporation for publishing the compositions.

On Wednesday morning we shall have a most interesting forum-a rabbi, a cantor and a congregant, discussing a subject which is so challenging to all of us-How Shall We Pray Today? The rabbi is a recognized authority on the liturgy, the chazzan is a former president of our Assembly who is loved not only for his musical attainments but for the exalted position he holds in our sacred calling, and the congregant is a man deeply interested and active in the conservative movement, but better known to most of us as a Broadway producer whose latest play has just opened in New York. Wednesday afternoon is devoted to our session for self-study-what we are and how we function today. The findings of a most revealing survey recently sent to our membership at large will be presented and discussed. Those who attended a similar session last year will remember it as one of the most exciting and illuminating discussions of the convention. The Wednesday evening concert has always been one of our "most-looked-forward-to" events. Once again we shall have a concert of music in the European tradition. Some of the great classical choral settings will be sung by an ensemble of hazzanim from the Philadelphia region, and one of the more brilliant examples of solo recitative will be presented by several of our colleagues.

This year we shall once again distribute complimentary copies of all the melodies sung congregationally, both at the services and during the dinner hour. I strongly urge all of our lay guests, whom we welcome with much warmth, not only as personal friends but as

fellow Jews interested deeply in the traditions and development of synagogue music, to attend all these services, as well as the events I have enumerated.

I want to close with the hope that each one of us will find something stimulating and inspiring in the three days ahead, that our minds may ever be open for the reception of new and enriching ideas, and that, together with the psalmists, we will be able to say — *Viv'hi Noam Adonoi Eloheynu oleynu, umaasey yodeynu kon'noh oleynu, umaasey yodeynu kno'neyhu . . .* Let Thy graciousness, O Lord our God, be upon us; establish Thou also the work of our hands for us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it."

EXCERPTS FROM AN ADDRESS

"What Path for Conservative Tradition"

Rabbi Edward Sandrow

President, Rabbinical Assembly of America

The Cantors Assembly, which aims to be an association of qualified, dedicated and self-respecting cantors within the framework of the Conservative Movement, is as important to all of us as are our educators, our teachers, our administrators, our youth leaders. The Cantors Assembly must, through its growing independence, its ever evolving status as a self-determining group, bring an end, once and for all, to the chaos and cheapness and vulgarity and free lancing and ignorance which still plague the American cantorate. You have already made such strides for our congregations. It is my hope that you will continue your interest and devotion in the Cantors Institute in order to make it an institute of even greater value.

The theme of your convention is dedicated to Hazzanut—the spiritual, the ethical, the musical, the traditional role of the Hazzan on the American scene, and in the Conservative Movement, in particular.

Last week President Kennedy and Prime Minister MacMillan warned the world that in spite of occasional glimpses of hope for peace between the East and West, the situation remains grave and calls for sacrifice. We Jews are so involved with our own problems of our people in North Africa and in Eastern Europe, we are so concerned about Israel to which land we are tied by history and faith, we are so touched by the reliving of that dark and tragic moment in our history symbolized by the trial of that bestial and inhuman murderer Adolf Eichmann, that we often forget the fact that peace and security for the Jewish world are dependent on the larger world in which we live. The rabbis in the Midrash (Deuteronomy Rabbah) had the insight to say, "every affliction in which Israel and the other nations of the earth share is indeed an affliction; that of Israel alone is not".

The man of religious belief is disappointed but not surprised. We have had this problem from the beginning of time—you cannot hide from crimes committed against God and man. You cannot violate the moral law and escape.

We call it by a general term, Torah—the Torah of morality and of ethics. Mankind will founder and will never relax until we who are in the line of historic tradition of our faith say to the world "you cannot violate the moral law of the Torah and be at ease" . . . We Jews are often accused of being some sort of a cult adhering to esoteric customs. A Christian clergyman only a few days ago said to me "we Christians belong to a universal religion which talks to all men. You Jews seem so preoccupied with your kosher butcher shops and your matzohs on Passover". Where was Christendom when the unspeakable crimes were visited by the Nazis on millions of our people? Did it carry out the universal moral law of our Torah "do not stand idly by when your fellow man is being destroyed". Our Torah first warned man and what is happening in our world is not at all unexpected to a Jew.

We Conservative Jews have a responsibility to teach ourselves and our communities that when man loses the yardstick—the ethical principles of the Bible and the Talmud—man can be converted into a beast.

I call for a dynamic and forceful recommitment to our role as a "priest" people dedicated to the ethical principles of the moral code of our Torah. Not just for our sakes, but for the world. We ourselves must live on a higher level of human behavior and human relations. Conservative pulpits and Conservative Judaism should thunder out against all forms of discrimination and hatred and social injustice. We of the Conservative Movement have a top level responsibility.

We also have responsibility to our inner lives as Conservative Jews. We spend so much time on so many inconsequential matters. I do not mean that the three arms of the Conservative Movement, namely, the Seminary, the United Synagogue and Rabbinical Assembly, must always be in agreement on all issues. The Rabbinical Assembly, representing more than 750 rabbis in our movement, is an independent organization and is to the United Synagogue what the individual rabbi is to his congregation. I have great respect for many of the laymen who guide the destinies of the United Synagogue. It too is independent. The Seminary, the academic arm of our Movement, possessing the greatest faculty in the world, must be supported and encouraged. But, often, in our clamoring for our individual rights we forget that Conservative Judaism needs more than ever to establish an image of itself in the American Jewish Community. We are in the true line of the historic tradition of our faith. We are traditional, yet progressive and liberal. We aim to conserve Jewish tradition while relating Judaism to modern life and its problems about which I spoke before. We believe in change and that change must lead to growth. We revere Torah but we do not hesitate to reinterpret the Halacha. We have constantly urged the study and knowledge of Hebrew. We have made religion and the synagogue central with us but we are broad enough to integrate into our living and thinking such diverse interpretations of Judaism as taught by a Schecter, a Friedlander, a Ginzberg, a Kaplan, a Finkelstein, and a Heschel. We have stressed Jewish peoplehood. We are more than any of the other religious groupings in American Jewish

life, were involved in the establishment of the State of Israel and the life and culture of our people in, Israel. We believe in innovation without regimentation.

Yet, I do not feel that we have fulfilled ourselves as we should have as a movement. What value is a set of standards for the United Synagogue, if the majority of Conservative Jews neglect the Sabbath, the Festivals, Kashruth-when this code gives them no aesthetic or spiritual satisfaction. We have improved our schools but the majority of our children still drop out at Bar Mitzvah age and very few of our congregations have functioning high schools. Many of our rank and file members lack a commitment to Conservative Judaism.

It is time to act for God and for Torah. Conservative Judaism must stiffen its backbone. It must not just idealize the past but feel that as Conservative Jews we have a destiny and a more positive commitment is necessary from every one of us. We must stop bickering among ourselves and aim for unity.

I call on our cantors to help create a better image for ourselves. Our houses of worship are only way stations on a long and hard road leading to the enrichment of our faith and to greater justice and peace in the world in which we live. I like to think of our task as Conservative Jews as the ferment needed in the soul of our people, not just for our own survival, but for the survival of mankind. Our path is a divine summons, the kind which was issued to Abraham of old "be you a blessing". Our movement can yet be such a blessing!

A CONCERT OF JEWISH MUSIC

Monday Evening, April seventeenth, 1961

at 10 o'clock

GROSSINGER'S
Liberty, New York

PROGRAM

Dos Gebet (Peretz	J. Roskin
Der Becher	S. Golub
HAZZAN EUGENE GOLDBERGER	
<i>Adath Israel, Montreal, Canada</i>	
Three Yemenite Songs	L. Algazi
Hine Mah Tov	
Shur Dodi	
Yismah Hatan	
Der Sholem Zocher (Manger)	L. Weiner
HAZZAN MORRIS LEVINSON	
<i>Kesser Israel, New Haven, Conn.</i>	
HELEN RHEIN, Piano	
Voices of Jerusalem	S. Doniach
Morning Song (Sara Levy)	
Yemenite Maiden	
Excerpts From The	
"Jeremiah Symphony"	L. Bernstein
MISS PHYLISS BRAUN, Soprano	
In Cheder	M. Milner
B'arvit Hanegev	<i>Israeli-Traditional</i>
HAZZAN SAUL HAMMERMAN	
<i>Beth El Congregation, Baltimore, Md.</i>	
AILEEN HAMMERMAN, Piano	

"The Last Sabbath" (A Dance Drama)
Original Music from "Y'diat Hashem" by
Hazzan Charles Davidson
featuring HAZZAN CHARLES DAVIDSON, *Soloist*
The Wantagh Jewish Center Choir

Wantagh, New York

Rose Drucker	Shirley Altman	Bernard Berger
Lorna Kasarsky	Florence Berger	Abraham Katell
Yetta Leinweber	Shirley Okrent	Leon Kararsky
Ella Rabinowitz	Rena Roth	Phil Erenstein
Hennie Saltman	Murray Haimson	Abe Leinweber
Mollie Shapiro	Marcus Krantz	Ian Stewart
	Harry Menkin	

FRANCIS DAVIDSON, *Conductor*

and the

DEBORAH ZALL DANCE COMPANY
Choreography by DEBORAH ZALL
The Dancers

DEBARAH ZALL	RENEE RAPPAPORT
PENNYFRANK	SUSAN SINDALL
	DANIEL JARAMILLO, Narrator

A Group of Yiddish Songs
MR. SIDOR BELARSKY, *Baritone*
MR. LAZAR WEINER, *Piano*

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1961 MORNING SESSION

Chairman, Hazzan George Wagner
Congregation Beth Yeshuruh, Houston, Texas

"Creating Synagogue Music For America"
Leader Dr. A. W. Binder New York City

Discussants:

Hazzan Gershon Ephros, New York City
Mr. Herbert Fromm, Brookline, Mass.
Mr. Sholom Secunda, New York City

Hazzan Wagner:

My dear hazzanim, I believe that this session will be one of the most interesting we have had at this Convention. Interesting because we have with us some of the most distinguished composers of Jewish music of our day. I am quite honored to be the Chairman of this session, called Composer's Forum.

These men have such extensive careers that it will take too long to tell you about their backgrounds. So, I am going to try, in a small way to give you an idea about what they have accomplished.

First, I would like to introduce to you (Of course, these men really do not need any introduction to you; most of you have sung their compositions, and you are familiar with their names.) Dr. A. W. Binder. He is an American musician, born in New York City. He received his musical education at Columbia University where he was awarded the Mosenthal Fellowship in

musical composition. Dr. Binder has lectured in many universities throughout the country. For more than 3 decades he has been professor of Liturgical Music at the Hebrew Union College. Dr. Binder has created works, not only in the Jewish field, but in the secular field. He has created for different instruments — for orchestra, chamber orchestra, operetta, dramatic-musical narratives, and of course, I know most of you, perhaps, sing his famous hymn, "Come O Sabbath Day." He is also musical director of the Stephen Wise Free Synagogue and the 92nd Street Y.M.H.A. One has but to listen to a service to realize that Dr. Binder is one of the great interpreters of Jewish musical culture. This is very interesting: in conferring on him the honorary degree of Doctor of Hebrew Letters, in 1963, the Hebrew Union College said this: "Dr Binder is a gifted teacher; he is a creative composer; a talented conductor; a pioneer in the field of Jewish folk and religious music, and champion of the return of the religious musical tradition to the modern synagogue; dedicated interpreter of liturgical music; beloved teacher of cantors; and builder of a bridge of music between Israel and the United States."

I present to you our leader of this morning, Dr. Binder.

Dr. Binder:

Thank you very much for this very gracious introduction.

The topic of this morning's discussion I would like to amend just a little. It is entitled, "Creating Synagogue Music in America." I would like to say "Creating an Atmosphere for Synagogue Music in America."

It has been my dream for a long time to see the faculties, students and alumni members of all three cantorial schools in America assembled together to discuss common problems. It took a long time coming, but thank God that prejudices were forgotten and that we have at least made a beginning. Let us hope that this will develop and continue for the glory of God and our synagogue musical art.

We are today going through a transitory period in our synagogues. The ears of our listeners have changed over the last 20-25 years. The same ears that listen to music on radio, television, recordings, and concerts come to the synagogue. Music and performances with which we were able to get away with 20 years ago are no longer accepted. Our young people are musically educated and if the music of the synagogue annoys them and their elders, they simply won't come. That is why we hear in so many quarters of bad attendances at Sabbath services.

Synagogue choral music may be divided into 4 subdivisions. One, it may be just sacred music, like much of the music of Sulzer or Lewandowski. It may be sacred and modal. Here I refer to the harmonization which is one of the big problems in synagogue music, like the *Ahavas Olom* by Jacobi, or *Mi Shamocha* by Freed in the Sabbath Morning service. It may be sacred, modal and Jewish like Bloch's Sacred Service or Weinberg's "May the Words" in the unison Service; or

Freed's *Shiru Ladonai* in the evening service. And the fourth is, it may be sacred, modal, Jewish and traditional. By traditional I mean based on the *nusach hatefilah* of the particular time. Not a Sabbath morning *nusach* on Friday evening, or a Rosh Hashonah *nusach* at a service of the *Sholosh Regolim*. So I say that the fourth is sacred, modal, Jewish and traditional. When I refer to our Jewish musical tradition, I mean the *nusach hatefilah*. The latter is, of course, the most genuine type of synagogue music and the most desirable.

We are fortunate in this country to have witnessed a renaissance of synagogue music which is the most significant in our history. We have composed more synagogue music, published and performed more good synagogue music than any other country in the world, including Israel. Nowhere in the world are there as many publishers who devote themselves to the publication of synagogue music as in this country. The imposing exhibition which you have in the back of this room is proof of this fact. Synagogue music composers are grateful to the many synagogues which have made it possible, by the way of excellent choirs and organists, to perform this music. The cantorial schools are sending out cantors who know what good synagogue music should be, and its bibliography.

Many synagogues in the past quarter of a century have engaged as organists and choir directors highly trained Jewish Musicians. The trained ears of many congregants have made it possible for new Jewish music to be introduced and the National Jewish Council has helped, through Jewish Music Month, to make synagogue music a chief attraction, at least, for one month during the year.

We must constantly strive to raise the standards of performance in our synagogues. We can attract the worshipper only when he gets that inspiration in the synagogue which he doesn't get in front of a T.V. set on Friday evening. Great choral music can be performed only by professional singers or highly trained volunteers (which are only too rare.) Volunteers are generally undependable and must of necessity stick to a monotonous repertoire in most cases, thereby shutting out from your service the important synagogue music. Congregations will pay the printer, the plumber, the janitor, but where music is concerned they want to economize.

What about congregational singing? I have felt for a long time that some of the tunes which we now call traditional, such as *Shema Yisrael*, *Kedusha*, *Hodo Al Eretz Ein Kelohenu* and many others, are, first of all, not Jewish tunes and do not express the meaning and majesty of these texts. I am very happy to say that in the publications of the Cantors Assembly of congregational tunes, (Zamru Lo, Volumes I and II) many very beautiful and genuinely Jewish tunes are included. One of them is, of course, a favorite, not only of mine, but also of my grandchildren, Cantor Nathanson's *Hazzon Et Ha-olam* which is a very beautiful tune and a very fine Jewish tune. These must be repeated. There are still a lot of cheap little tunes, *liedelach*, being badly sung in many synagogues every Saturday by our con-

gregations. Of necessity these must be repeated from week to week and year to year. The service is bound to lose its spiritual inspiration and become monotonous. Congregation singing shuld not dominate the service. There should be a balance between good choral music and congregational participation.

Years ago when congregations went out to look for a cantor, they looked for a voice, like three hands in a poker game looking for a fourth hand. They don't go out looking for a person, they go out looking for a hand. We need a fourth hand. Congregations went out to look for a voice. It was that much impersonal. Sometimes they did manage to get a man with a voice, but one who was trained by a phonograph company. I sometimes refer to these phonograph-trained hazzanim as "phonies." Thank God that our cantorial schools and our cantorial assemblies are gradually eliminating this evil.

Last year there was this big discussion in Israel, "Who is a Jew?" This morning I want to raise the question, who is a hazzan?

One, he must have a secular education. Two, he must have a Jewish education. Three, he must be a trained musician. Four, he must have piety or else he has no business in this profession. Five, he must have a voice. I place the voice at the very end because some of our greatest cantors in cantorial history had almost no voice at all. Take for example, Avraham Tottenberg, with whom I sang as a child; Zeidel Rovner, Moses Tobiansky and others. They and their works will be remembered for generations to come, long after the great-voice-cantors will have been forgotton. Of course, we had our Rosenblatts, Rutmans and Roitmans, but one does not come to the synagogue today just to hear a voice. One comes to hear a *Sheliah Tsibur* and all that it entails. I should like to see abolished, gentlemen, from the practice, the patch-quilt type of recitative and choral piece. I refer to the process of taking a piece from here and a piece from there and patching it together into one composition. One would never think of performing in this manner in the musical world, and we are part of the musical world, a movement of a Beethoven symphony followed by a movement by Mozart and then a movement by Haydn or Tchaikovsky and calling it a symphony. We must also be careful not to allow impurities such as Western influences to enter our *nusach ha-tefilah*. We must strive to keep it pure. We must aim to find out what is right and what is wrong; what is accepted as the authentic *nusach*. Tradition is something which is not passively inherited but something to be attained by great labour. There are many sources, gentlemen, where this can be checked.

Imagine, if each cantor contributes only one wrong note and one change into our *nusach ha-tefilah*, how disfigured it can become in only one generation.

In my practice as a synagogue musician I've always had goals. I never perform a piece just for the sake of performing it. It must have a reason and a purpose at all times. Even a response must have its reason and purpose and atmosphere and spirit. What should be the goals of synagogue music at our service today?

One, to establish a synagogue atmosphere. Two, to awaken the spiritual qualities in man. Three, to exalt the spirit. Four to aid him in the concentration on prayer. To achieve a state of *kavanah*. Five, to aid him in achieving a prayerful spirit, which is almost the same thing.

Recently at a meeting of the Jewish Forum, I heard Dr. Hugo Weisgal speak on Jewish music and the Jewish composer. He gave us his lis tof Jewish composers. They included Meyerberg, Offenbach, Halevy, Mendelsohn, Schoenberg, Bloch, Milhaud, Diamond, Foss, etc.

I would like to give you my list: Engel, Milner, Rozofsky, Achron, Alman, Bloch, Freed, Binder, Chajes, Fromm, Shalit, Weiner, Helfman, Ephros, Silver, Zilberts, Secunda. If it were not for this latter list, I doubt, gentlemen, whether we would be sitting here this morning discussing the subject of synagogue music in America.

Hazzan Wagner:

Thank you Dr. Binder. You presented your talk in a very lucid manner so that all of us can understand it.

Our next personality is a man that has come to our conventions every year. He is a man that we love. If you know him and you meet him you can't help being impressed by him. You know who I mean-1 am talking about Gershon Ephros. We had the opportunity not too long ago to celebrate his 70th anniversary. He was born 70 years ago in a place called Serotzk, near Warsaw. His environment permitted him to gain a thorough knowledge of Eastern synagogue music at an early age. He became a cantor at an early age and choir master in S'gersh. He later moved to Palestine where Idelson gave him a deeper understanding of hazzanut and of course, of the Hebrew language too. After his immigration to the United States Hazzan Ephros was first appointed cantor in Norfolk, Va. and then in New York and finally in 1929 at Temple Mordecai in Perth Amboy. In addition to his very fine compositions with which many of us are familiar, we are indebted to Gershon Ephros for his comprehensive and wonderful anthologies. We owe him a great debt. I now present to you Hazzan Gershon Ephros.

Hazzan Ephros:

Thank you very much, Colleague Wagner. Dr. Binder, Mr. Fromm, Mr. Secunda, my colleagues, ladies and gentlemen: When I came to Israel three years ago, I was introduced to a venerable Rosh Yeshiva, Rabbi Gordon of the Lomzer Yeshiva. He asked how cantors are trained in America. I told him that I had been teaching young cantors. So he asked me, "Are they teaching *da lifne mi ata omed* in your school?" I told him they do not teach it but the knowledge is in their blood and in their bones because in the modern congregation the cantor has to face the congregants. If they fear the congregations of lay people how should I feel at this moment when I face you, my dear colleagues and such illustrious men around me. You can just imagine how this weighs heavy on me. However, I am confident, because I feel that there is a current of

friendship coming to me from you and this is giving me the courage and the strength to overcome that fear, I don't want to say *hin'ni heani mi-maas* for this would be saying a lie, but I almost felt like saying *nirash venifhad*. I hope that with your help I will be able to do my share this morning. However, I want you to know that when I get through perhaps you will not be so very happy about me because I feel that I am not going to sing your praise. I feel that we have a great deal to achieve. We have a long road and that is as the phrase in Hebrew goes, *rabbah hamlakha v'arukha haderekh*. It is a long road.

While we have a great deal to be happy about when I look back to years ago, we cannot overlook the condition in the cantorate. Many of us have adopted the road of least resistance. We live from hand to mouth and are not interested so much to elevate the cantorate as much as to please the congregants. Of course, I am happy to see, especially today, that we can look forward to hearing tonight new compositions, which for the first time in the history of any cantorial organization were commissioned. I would say the best brains of American Jewish composers were asked to write for the synagogue. This is a great event. But I would like to ask you, are you all going to use that music?

Now, I come to the point. I shall read to you what I have prepared. It is not very long. As you can see I have only three pages.

Fifteen years ago our dear friend, Dr. Joseph Yasser wrote an article in the *Menorah Journal*, entitled, "Jewish Composer, Look Within." The ideas expressed therein are as pertinent and vital today as they were then. However, much creativity has taken place since that plea by many Jewish musicians of different schools of thought. These may be divided into two main streams—those writing within and those writing from without. Yet it is of interest to note that there has been a gradual rapprochement between the two, a so-called movement to the center. The composers from within assimilating the musical form and language of our time with sensitivity and aesthetic pertinence; composers from without rediscovering the vigor and potency of the authentic Jewish idiom.

This change is not an accidental one nor has it come to pass through wishful thinking. Both schools of thought have been making the supreme effort, in order to achieve organic unity between the Jewish traditional "melos" and the musical craftsmanship of our day. Those creating from without realized that Jewish music worthy of the name must be rooted to the tradition of its people, its history, lore and legend. In short, its way of life. Those working from without realized that horizons must be broadened so that our tradition is seen in the total context of world culture.

Dr. Jacob Agus in a recent paper on Conservative philosophy writes : "To understand a people or tradition is to analyze it into the component parts and then to put the parts into the universal category into which they belong. All religious traditions are unique as chem-

ical compounds are unique, but compounds consist of elemental parts which are universal. What of the vitality of our traditional songs, so often asked by my young fellow composers. I have to find an answer. Not only do they express the thought that it lacks vitality but they even say that East-European music is ghetto music, and they sneer at it. In answer let me paraphrase Chaim Nachman Bialik from his *Divre Sifrut*, speaking of the vitality of *Halacha*, that great structure which was built hundreds and hundreds of years, What does it mean for the Jew today? And he says that these are the questions that are put before him. Shall we ever bring forth living waters from this rock? His answer is yes. Yes, if God's staff is in our hands and the living spirit in our hearts.

It is the same. The gifted man creates out of that tradition, of that East-European tradition, that monument, that will live forever.

But here I come to ourselves, the cantors. It is the cantorate, however, which can make this new fertile creativity live. Though mindful of the cantor's dilemma who would advance his art and would please his congregants — yet we have in our very midst pioneers who are experimenting with new music and are winning over the sympathetic ear for the creative efforts of our contemporaries. They plead like Antony in Julius Caesar, *ahenu b'ai yisrael* "give us your ears." Similarly, I would say to you *shelichei tsibur*, give us your ears. But ears will not open without an intensive study of present day music.

Please, dear colleagues, do not suspect me of pleading the cause of Arnold Schoenberg's liturgical music.

Appropos of this I would quote my friend Dr. Werner's statement, or part of his article in *The Reconstructionist*, in tribute to my unforgettable friend, Dr. Isadore Freed : "The three great masters of art music in the synagogue are Ernest Bloch, Darius Milhaud and Arnold Schoenberg. They all came from the periphery of Judaism and endeavored each in his own way to draw near the essence of Jewish melos and Jewish spirit." Certainly Bloch and Milhaud have made a very important contribution to the Jewish service. I would add the name of Joseph Achron and I would add the names of the illustrious composers who are with us today.

I, however, question Arnold Schoenberg's contribution to Jewish religious worship. This intellectual giant who orbited into space long before the Russian Yuri Gagarin and who advanced music many years ahead, has with his *Kol Nidre* and Psalm 130 made a contribution to the universal art of the 12 tone system, but not to art music in the synagogue.

Our esteemed friend, Herbert Fromm, who is here with us, wrote a striking evaluation of Psalm 130 in connection with the long article about the Vinaver Anthology where that Psalm is included. And I quote him: "the work is a delicate maze of the most subtle, unsing-

able chromatic counterpoint. The difficulties are so forbidding that we doubt if the effect in performance would ever be commensurate with the arduous labors of preparation. One stands in awe before this terrifying piece of paper music that seems destined to remain buried within the pages of this expensive anthology as in a satin-lined coffin." The way he described this piece of music was extraordinary.

But there are extremists to the right who would entertain the worshippers with their own special brand of musical cocktail rather than ennoble and purify the soul.

In conclusion may I say that for the cantorate to survive as a sacred art in this age of creative plenty, hazzanut in its noblest form, embodying every tradition **mi-mizrah umimaarav, mitzaf on umidaron** should become a source of inspiration so that both cantors and composers together may create an idiom that is new in form yet old in content speaking the voice of Yisrael **saba**, in accents of a revitalized and rejuvenated people a music that will ring forth with the vigor of youth and the spirit of the pioneer. Composer and cantor shall thus be the vanguard of a new renaissance in our sacred music. Their dreams and aspirations shall embrace our people's destiny and that of all created **b'tzelem Elohim**.

Hazzan Wagner:

In every Jewish periodical of Jewish music you will find one outstanding name and that is the name of Herbert Fromm. Mr. Fromm was born in Bavaria and after his immigration from Germany in 1935 he assumed the position of Choir master at Temple Israel in Boston. He has written many works. In fact, we are quite proud to sing his works. I have several choirs that do a number of his compositions, particularly "The Lord is My Shepherd" and others. Whenever we perform them we always enjoy them because they are so well written. He has written the Friday evening service called, *Adath Israel*; he has composed settings for Psalm 23 and other Psalms, the Song of Miriam, which, by the way, was awarded the Ernest Bloch award. All these all testify to his wonderful talents. I present to you now Herbert Fromm.

Mr. Fromm:

Thank you Cantor Wagner. Distinguished colleagues, hazzanim, guests: I shall read a short statement of 4 points, not really a speech and this might induce a discussion. My first point:

I rest the case for the use of a contemporary musical idiom in synagogues on the premise that there exists natural kinship between the means of contemporary music and the requirements of Hebrew melos. The free meters of Hebrew declamation are met by flexible use of musical time signature and irregular length of musical periods. The mode kind of Hebrew melody, the traditional or freely invented, can be convincingly inter-

preted by modern chord structures, by polyphonic devices, by judicious use of unison, and other means.

My second point: The American synagogue should broaden its culture by taking in some of the melodic material of Oriental Jewish communities as presented in the work of Idelsohn. As example, I give you the composer Heinrich Shalit who, in his Friday Eve liturgy, has shown the way to a successful integration. I refer specifically to such pieces as *Tov L'hodot, L'cho Dodim, V'ahav ta* and *Yevarechacha*.

Third point: Modern architecture in the building of new synagogues is now generally accepted. Music need not stay behind this trend for contemporary expression. I am not speaking here for a modernism which is widely experimental. I mean a modernism that respects traditional values and understands the role of music within the framework of liturgy. These requirements, in my mind, are best met by people who spend a lifetime in the synagogue. Outsiders of great talent have also contributed to synagogue music but I have always found that they have just missed the liturgical tone which cannot be heard from the outside. The best of the old material should be retained, but the younger generation of worshippers, no longer attached to the style of 19th century Ashkenazic idiom, will welcome new territory.

My 4th point is merely practical. We must expect congregational resistance and we need patient education by which steady progress can be made possible. Let me also say that while many new works will not last, some will, if given the chance. New today, they will in due time acquire the cloak of tradition as much as compositions of the 19th century, not based on specific tradition, like Lewandowski's 115th Psalm, have become standard in the repertoire of the synagogue. I would welcome your reactions later to this point.

Hazzan Wagner :

For our last speaker, and not the least, is a man, who ever since I can remember, I have always seen his name on placards of some kind presenting some kind of musical composition, or play or operetta. This man has, been creative in all fields of Jewish music. He is very versatile. By the way, I understand that when he was a boy he studied to be a cantor. It's a good thing he did not become a cantor because then he would give us too much competition, considering his versatility. His list of accomplishments includes music for the theater, chamber music, symphonic works, opera and popular song.

Mr. Secunda is an original and distinguished creator and has imbued his compositions with all the color and mystic beauty of a proud and ancient Jewish heritage. I should like to recommend to you his two services that were recently published. One is called *Kabbalat Shabbat*. Our own Saul Meisels has recorded the second, *Shabbat Hamalkah*. These works were published by Mills Music and are available here today. Mr. Secunda.

Mr. Secunds :

Mr. Chairman, distinguished composers, hazzanim, ladies and gentlemen: First I must ask forgiveness for not having prepared a speech, I always ask to speak last, if I can help it, because if I hear other speakers speak first, I have enough to learn from them to know what to say when they get through. So today while I listened as intently as you did to all the speakers, I made some notations and from now on, I shall go on my own.

I was primarily very much impressed, last night, with the address by Rabbi Sandrow and I felt that the same address could have been applied, very easily, by a musician for musicians, quoting him practically verbatim, only interpreting them as a musician, as a composer.

I am the one who probably today and ever before, always find myself on the battle field. For example, when I listened today I'm fully in accord with everything I have heard thus far. Yet when all these things come into practice that's where I begin to take my guns out all over again because that's where I disagree with the end results. Everyone speaks of *Nuuach Ha-tefilah*. Everyone speaks of how important it is to keep the synagogues as synagogues and yet when we examine thoroughly, when we scrutinize the works of the modern composers, of the American Jewish composers of today, we must recognize the fact that they deviate from all of those things that have been advocated today. That of course goes not for all but for some.

The rabbi last night said, he tried to stress the importance for the need for religious commitment and this is what I would like to see in all the compositions that we do. I wish to see in all our service that religious commitment, but, I want to add to that religious commitment the adjective "Jewish". We hear a good many services where we can hear religious commitment but not *Jewish religious commitment*. That is what I desperately oppose. I want *Jewish religious commitment* in our services.

He was talking about making an end to the chaos that exists today in our synagogues. And I wholeheartedly support that but we find that chaos all over, in all our various forms of synagogues.

We that find chaos with the Orthodox cantors who resort to acrobatics, unnecessary acrobatics in their service, but we also find that in the Reform service where we do not find any Jewish sentiment at all.

I must proudly say and happily say that in my travels throughout the land I find a great change even in the Reform movement. I can go in and I can hear in a Reform synagogue a Hassidic melody beautifully performed. It does my heart good. But this chaos must be done away with all over, in every synagogue. How? By using the proper methods to which we will come.

His talk on dedication to hazzanut has a distinct significance for me. (And this is where I am going to differ a little bit in the 5 point program listed by my distinguished colleague, Professor Binder.) I agree with every one of those 5 requirements he listed but not in the same category. What he put at the end, I would Put at the first. That would be my first requirement.

We read and we are all familiar with that requirement: that only those who had pleasant voices were to sing praises to the Lord. My dear fellow hazzanim, if the voice will be put at the end of the list, every rabbi could replace you because every rabbi is a frustrated hazzan. Of course, I agree wholeheartedly that every hazzan must learn *nusach*. In the greatest number of cases *nusach* is the important thing if one wants to be a hazzan. I even go a step further. The use, the improvisation of *nusach* is very important for a hazzan. And, of course, the musical training is important. I agree with the rest. Only that I would not put the voice at the end. I would put it at the top. Without that we don't need hazzanim ; everybody, the shamash, could also be a hazzan.

The rabbi spoke, last night, of the importance of having an image. This is the important thing. I think we all agree on that. We all spoke about that but not in the same terms. Image-we must create in our service, in our compositions for the synagogue. We must create something that will bear that Jewish image which for thousands of years has been carried as a burden on the shoulders of every Jew who survived the diaspora. That image-what is happening to that image today? When we use modern techniques of composition-I don't rebuke that statement and I don't oppose that statement -but by means of modern techniques when we change our image, I say no modern techniques.

First of all our image-I want to be able to recognize you as a Jew. Don't put on all sorts of masks for me where when I see you I don't know where you belong. First of all, I want to know where do you belong. I want to know what do you stand for. If there is no difference in our liturgy then why make an issue of it altogether. But there is a difference in our liturgy. No one denies that fact whether you are in the Reform, Conservative or Orthodox movement. You do not deny the fact that there is an image, that there is a difference between one liturgy and another. Therefore, let us stick to our liturgy and I think that we have the right and the strong desire to recreate it, to stick to our image because our liturgy is rich; our liturgy is old and many other liturgies learned from our liturgy. Therefore, we should not run away from our liturgy.

I hear all rabbis in their sermons stressing the point of *kushrut*. Fine. But *kashrut* is only the element for the *kishhe*. Where is the *Kashrut* for your spiritual satisfaction? This is the *kashrut* that I want to see in our service. We as musicians, as hazzanim, as composers, we must watch for that *kashrut* very seriously to see that that *kashrut* is not violated. We want to have that *kashrut* in the *nusach ha-tefilah*. We don't want any fancy harmonies or any fancy organ accompaniment to cover up the *nusach ha-tefilah*.

I certainly love to hear very interesting accompaniments; very interesting organ preludes; interludes and postludes in the background to the services because I think that the organ gives something to the service. If we don't understand verbatim our prayers, the organ, that accompaniment, that harmonic treatment, that rhythmic pattern, help to give us greater understand-

ing of the service. But when we allow ourselves to put the organ accompaniment, the heavy harmonic treatment, above the *nusach* and above the liturgy, you forget to listen to the hazzan, forget to listen to the *nusah ha-tefilah*, forget to listen to the prayer, just listen to the organ, that I oppose.

Cantor Ephros very beautifully spoke of this da *lifne mi ata omed*. Only I should like to put my own interpretation to that, if there are no objections on your part. *Da lifne mi ata omed* must have a different significance and that will refer to our services, our music. We want to know, once and for all, is the synagogue Carnegie Hall or the Metropolitan Opera House or is it a night club? I find all these three elements in our services. I hear very often in an orthodox *Shul* music that would not even be fit in a night club. On the other hand, I hear in a Reform or even Conservative synagogue music that would maybe, fit Carnegie Hall but not the synagogue.

Da lifne mi ata omed! You must once and for all decide are you a cantor, an opera singer? Are you writing music for Carnegie Hall or are you writing music for your congregation, for the worshipper to come to pray and to listen too. If this is what he comes for, this is what you must give him. This is my interpretation of da *lifne mi ata omed*.

In conclusion I'll just say this.

I oppose this business of making our temples, our synagogues laboratories for composers. I strongly oppose when a composer, who failed to do his homework when he was a student in school, comes now to do homework and practices it on the worshipper. That I oppose. The synagogue, the temple is not a laboratory. I do believe in experimental works in so far as our liturgy is concerned. That is what we are here for. If we are new composers, if we want to bring something new, some fresh blood and something interesting to our liturgy, (I believe in that) we must make experiments--only along the prescribed lines. We must not deviate and not go on wrong paths, and not to lose the address of our synagogues.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Dr. Binder:

Needless to say, as a contemporary Jewish musician, I didn't agree with all that Mr. Secunda said. I am glad that he agreed with me, but I think that he misunderstood me. When I gave you the 5 requirements for a hazzan and put the voice at the end, I didn't mean to minimize voice. It is important, but, gentlemen, this has been the plague of your profession. Do you realize that up to the time that the cantorial schools were organized that every frustrated opera singer became a hazzan. He didn't know *peirush hamilos*; he was a phonograph cantor. This was the plague of your profession. Any body who had some sort of a voice became a hazzan. I am not afraid of a rabbi becoming a hazzan. I am not afraid of a *shamash* becoming a hazzan. Don't worry about them. They have their own work. What I am afraid of is that everybody who has a voice and after

he has been a failure in every other profession, in every other phase of the music profession, he finally says, perhaps I will become a hazzan. That is the plague of your profession.

That is why I said that first he must have an education, he must be a *mentsch*, he must have a Jewish education, he must be a pious person, and then, if he has a voice, *avada gut*.

I must tell you about a man who gave me a great deal of inspiration (I spend my summers on Lake Placid). There was a little *shule* there where I used to go on Friday evenings. They couldn't afford a cantor and a rabbi so they had both professions merged into one. He didn't have much of a voice, but when he stood there on Friday evenings, I felt that it was Friday evenings. There was atmosphere of the Friday evening service--there was the *nusach ha-tefila*, there was the sweetness that went along with it. A man that has only a voice is not able to do that, don't kid yourselves about it. It sounds very good. Mr. Secunda is very adept. He has great experience in the theater and so on. It sounded very funny and I am sure that you are all tickled by it, but this has been the plague of your profession. Now we are trying to wipe that out. There are the free-lancers who are *amoratzim* and who defile our profession and it is for this reason that we felt it very important to organize the cantorial schools, to eliminate this, just this, the fourth hand in poker.

Mr. Fromm:

I have very many reasons to admire Mr. Secunda's eloquence. He speaks beautifully, with great fire, but above all with pertinence. His logic is like the logic of a man who says the pig is a dirty animal, change his name. He starts the other way around. He first begins to dismiss all we call progress but he fails to say just where those instances are. Now, he speaks of the Jewish image. This is a very broad statement. We are not here to philosophize, we are here to speak tachlis. We ask what is a Jew? The answers are nothing to me but a hazy statement. I think this is what he means: his image of a Jew which might not be everybody's image of a Jew. There are many ways of being a Jew.

Nay, he complains about fancy harmony, over-loaded organ accompaniments that, cover the *nusach ha-tefila*. Let me say just this: the better composers of the progressive school in synagogue music are very adept in handling organ accompaniments. There are some of the older school, I will admit, that did write very heavy, very undistinguished piano-like accompaniment for the organ which never sounded good on the organ. The better composers who know the organ, may be organists themselves, do better.

This business of fancy harmony. Again, he used the word "fancy" which is such a derogatory term. There is a demagogic element in just using the term "fancy". It is a degradation of what should be called progressive harmony. There was a time, let me recall, when a man like Wagner wrote *Tristan*. This could have been called fancy harmony and it was. If we had stopped at what Mr. Secunda would call the image of music of the time,

we would never have gone beyond dominant tonic relationships. Music has made immense progress. We hear now Wagner's *Tristan* even whistled on the street. If we don't begin with new concepts I doubt that there will be progress. I will admit, and I think that Mr. Secunda is completely right, that sometimes the synagogue is no more than a laboratory for a new composer to try out his talents. Maybe that's true. I think it is not true in many instances, but again we only have success by also admitting failures. There is no other way of getting there if we don't have the patience with failures. But anybody who is set on progress must accept this fact of failures. Thank you.

Cantor Ephros:

For the interpretation of *da lifne mi ata omed*, Mr. Secunda, my dear friend, referred to my interpretation, I simply stated the facts. We know that it should be the tradition of the Jew to have the fear of the Lord in his heart.

Sulzer's *B'Rosh Hashana*, or Lewandowski's *Ki Keshimcho* and Weintraub's *Ki Keshimcho*, are great pieces that will survive. That doesn't mean that because these composers produced great masterpieces in a limited musical vocabulary that we must stick to that vocabulary today. Today we have been enriched with great new sounds. I don't say that we shall use the color of the theater in the synagogue but the Jewish composer today is a child of his period and if we have not yet today a Bartok of our own, we listen to Bartok and we see what he did in this age. We are children and we are listening to the music of the masters and we are inevitably influenced by them. Therefore, our program, our progress in synagogue music must go on because we have a long ways to go. Music is only, comparatively a few hundred years old, especially our music which has been dormant for so long. We are just awakening and the future is a future of progress.

Dr. Binder:

We have with us also, as you know, Lazar Weiner, a distinguished composer of synagogue music and a distinguished musician. Mr. Weiner has asked to say a few words.

Mr. Weiner:

I am talking directly to the hazzanim. I am not taking part in the discussion. My first name is Lazar, my middle name is 'Rehearsal', my last name is Weiner, so I will run away as soon as I conclude.

We listen to music through our ears; very often it misses our minds. Tonight we are performing 16 compositions. They are completely new for you. I am sure that when we are through with the 16th, you will not know one from the other, for the simple reason that *Ki Keshimcho* you have heard so many times, and the *Rosh Hashana* masterpieces are in your blood. You have to get acquainted. I would suggest that you get hold of a copy. I know when I have to listen to a new

composition, I buy it and I go to Carnegie Hall and follow the score. Whatever it is, buy it. If you don't have enough money buy only my *Ya-atet*. I am very serious. I strongly suggest, get hold of the music. We shall see that you will have light so that you will be able to follow to see what mistakes we make and see those harmonies which my other colleagues are talking about. Thank you.

Dr. Binder:

We shall hear from Mr. Secunda (very briefly, I hope) because we want to hear questions from the others.

Mr. Secunda :

I just want to make briefly these remarks that maybe I misunderstood some of my colleagues but I am afraid that my colleagues completely missed the point that I was striving for. I would like to tell my friend, Dr. Yinder, about his gramaphone-record cantors, that his 5 point program did not wipe out, these "cantors" because I can list at least a dozen cantors who hold positions now, particularly in Reform synagogues that read the Hebrew script. This was not wiped out. I still maintain that a hazzan, if not for the voice, forget the Cantors Assembly. I would also like to tell my friend Fromm that I was not referring to the image. What is a Jew? or What makes a Jew? That is not my concern but the concern of the rabbi. I am concerned with what makes Jewish liturgical music. I want the image of Jewish liturgical music to remain. It remained for thousands of years and I don't want, through the methods of laboratory, to do away with the image of Jewish liturgical music. I also want to point out, contrary to what Mr. Fromm said about the modern composers of today regarding organ music. I am sure Mr. Fromm knows it if he listens to all the latest works as I did, that even those composers who are themselves professional organists, those are more guilty than those who do not know how to play the organ. They make the organ an organ solo and forget the service completely. That I have heard myself. As to the term "fancy harmony" if I had not been talking to musicians, I would not have used that term. I don't get scared of modern harmonization. I hear it every night in my capacity as music critic, I listen to everything--what I like and what I don't like--and I say my opinion after that. When I say "fancy harmony" it is the term that I try to apply when some composers try to be fancy or out-landishly fancy and forget the words, forget the prayer, forget the meaning of the prayer and forget the meaning of each word and cover it up with a chord that has absolutely no relation to the word or to the prayer; that's what I mean by "fancy harmony". As to your contention about Wagner I am fully in accord with you, nobody will doubt Wagner's contribution although I disagree with you about people whistling *Tristan* and *Isolde* on the street. If they do I would like you to give me the address of those streets, I would like to go to listen to them whistle *Tristan*.

Question from the floor:

It seems that the differences of opinion between Secunda and Fromm is a question of the image of liturgical music. I would like them both to analyze, as far as possible, what is the image, exactly.

Secunda:

My definition of liturgical music would be of keeping tradition in tact, not to deviate from it. In other words, if a hazzan is going to sing *Kaddish* from *Tal* or from *Geshem*, I don't want it to sound like *Tristan and Isolde*.

Fromm:

I myself did not use the word "image". I think it is a broad term. I don't like such a hazy term. Since I am called upon to say what it would mean I would say that Mr. Secunda said that the image of liturgical music is thousands of years old. I must make correction. Our liturgical music as art music is very much younger, only 200 years old, and the first harmonized music as we know it came from Solomon Rossi who lived at the beginning of the 17th century and is only 200 years old. What we have here is not a tradition that can be traced back, say to the Temple in Jerusalem. It is a tradition created by man; a tradition that has won over a great number of Jewish people and will continue to do so. Since tradition has had great creators why can we not create again a tradition in our time and in 100 years hence we will be also a part of a tradition.

Dr. Binder:

I think one thing ought to be clarified that all four of us on the platform advocate the return and the retention of the *nusach ha-tefila*. The only question is, shall it treated as it was in 1850 or in 1861 or shall it be treated as the musical art stands today in 1961—that's the problem.

Hazzan Edgar (from the floor) :

Is it best to have non-Jews singing in the choir or a volunteer choir of non-professionals.

Dr. Binder:

Perhaps my own experience might clarify this matter. When I came to the Free Synagogue years ago when Dr. Wise was our rabbi we had our service at Carnegie Hall, Sunday mornings. The first thing I said to Dr. Wise was (we had double quartets then) I must have Jewish singers. I found as I looked around that the reason why we didn't cultivate enough Jewish zingers for the synagogue was that the synagogue never paid adequately. When you compare the salaries which good singers get in the churches, we find that the synagogues pay very much less. We never said to a Jewish singer, "Look, it's going to pay you, and it's part of your work to devote yourself to synagogue music." I think that we ought to try to cultivate this. In the larger cities it shouldn't be as difficult. I still main-

tain that Jewish singers belong in the synagogue and I've never been able to stand up before a choir of goyim and conduct whether it is a Sabbath service or a N'lah service. There is something sacreligious in that.

Hazzan Spiro (from the floor) :

I've heard every compose-r on the panel tell us what a hazzan is. I am much more interested today to know what a Jewish composer in. I would like to refer myself primarily to Hazzan Ephros, he is the only one on the panel who is a Conservative composer. I should like, perhaps if you can detail for us, some sort of philosophy of Conservative Jewish music, what the ideal should be.

Dr. Binder:

I think it is important—what is a Jewish composer. We are all Jewish composers here and perhaps each one of us will very briefly state what makes a Jewish composer.

Hazzan Ephros:

I would agree with Dr. Binder, whether it is for the Conservative, Reform or Orthodox because there is no difference in the liturgy whether it is Hebrew or English text, liturgy is liturgy. I would say that the Jewish composer for the synagogue should have the background of Jewish tradition in his blood, that it will speak out the language of Jewish music. It is not to be a piece of music like Prokofiev took some Jewish themes and made music. It is good Russian music in spite of it. But the Jewish musician of today must speak a different language. It is that language we must expect of our Jewish composers.

Mr. Fromm:

The Jewish composer must have a deep love for the Jewish heritage, he must know tradition, but not necessarily employ it. I am referring to Ernest Bloch who was not interested in folk-lore, not interested in *nusach* but did a magnificently creative work in *Avodat Ha-Kodesh*. There are two ways of being a Jewish composer. He can be either freely creative and just go being responsive to his Jewishness or he can be a creative composer who employs the mode, the *nusach* he is acquainted with. There are two ways and I wouldn't say which way is the better one.

Mr. Secunda:

I've discussed this question of what is a Jewish composer many times before and those of you who read my articles know that I have opposed very strongly when Morton Gould, Leonard Bernstein, and Douglas Moore wrote for the synagogue because I thought they don't know anything about synagogue music. I think that a Jewish composer should have all the requirements—the 5 point program that Dr. Binder gave to you before minus a voice plus more musical education and above all with an awful lot of talent for composing.

Dr. Binder:

Very briefly, I've always, in my career, distinguished between a composer who is a Jew and a Jewish composer. Aaron Copeland is a composer who is a Jew. Herbert b'romm is a Jewish composer. A Jewish composer: Let me tell you my own background. My father was a hazzan. I sang in his choir when I was 4. At 7 I became a choir boy with one of the most talented hazzanim of that day who was a choir director, too. He had a deep bass voice. He was a pupil of Yerucham, he and Boruch Schorr and Belzer sang with Yerucham at that time. I inherited that tradition.

Somebody once said about me that the tradition of the synagogue is in my mother's milk. No matter what I try to write, whether it is an orchestral piece or whether it is a choral piece, no matter what it is, somehow or other it comes out Jewish. At one time, my wife said to me, "You are an American, you were born in this country, why don't you try to write American music?" When I started to write American music it came out Jewish. Why, because it was in my mother's milk. I am very proud of that and those of you who know my music know that it comes that way. I am not at all ashamed to say to you that I am an observant Jew. I put on tallis and tefillin every day, despite the fact that I have been affiliated with the &form movement,

Let me tell you this little story. When I became choir director of the Free Synagogue, my father, who is an orthodox Jew-but who is a very thoughtful one, said to me: "Aren't you afraid what those Reform Jews are going to do to your son?" No, I'm not afraid, I'm afraid of what he is going to do to them.

Hazzan Schwartzman (from the floor) :

The question of the Jewish singer in the choir went unanswered. In all due respect I think it should be answered. This is a problem which I myself have experienced. The synagogue is a place of worship not only for the congregants but for the hazzan. Back in the days of my class work with Prof. Binder, I remember he said, "Go to *shule* a half hour earlier and get the feeling that you are at the synagogue." I do that. Many times I arrive before the rabbi. This is not so with choir singers. It's a job to them. If they are Jewish, at least, you know that they are going to follow the service. What I see, when I do get up to the choir loft, sometimes it makes me sick I get very annoyed I would like to fire the whole choir and the choir director sometimes. Just for this reason alone. The synagogue is a place of worship not only for those who are sitting in the seats in the pews but for those who are performing the service as well. Non-Jews may say the words correctly, they don't feel them. This is in our blood, this is what we grew up on; this is the 6,000,000 dead and all the rest. I feel that the choir which you heard last night conducted by Hazzan Davidson is a perfect example of what can be done with a volunteer group to bring them to perfection, to bring them to do beautiful music. It depends, as Prof. Binder says, on the choir director, not on the singers.

Hazzan H. Hammerman (from the floor) :

I am very much frustrated and I find myself mostly in agreement with my friend Mr. Secunda because I feel that you overlook the forgotten man, namely the congregant. When I say write music, Jewish music, I feel that you are overlooking one thing. To me, in Los Angeles, which is strictly a non-Jewish city, although we have the second largest Jewish community in the country, it's very sickening. I find this is true all over the country; most of the congregants don't know how to say Ivre and you try to get them to like the so-called modern contemporary music. When I *daven* and I can hear the people sing along with me, I get the feeling, the projection, of what Jewish *t'filah* is. True that it may be European, but my friends, as far as I'm concerned, the Jew of the Diaspora, the Jew of the ghetto, be is the one who is responsible for Judaism being alive today. We are not going back to the Jew of the Prophets' time of the Biblical time. I want the type of music that will get the congregation interested and feel Judaism as it should be felt.

Hazzan Weisgal (from the floor) :

I was sitting here and listen very carefully. I am delighted to hear all the different opinions. I agree with Mr. Fromm. I agree with Mr. Secunda but may I be privileged to ask you, Dr. Binder: You said you started singing when you were 4. I started when I was 5. I would like to ask you a question. If I remember correctly you said in your address that Western music ought to be taken out of the synagogue. Did you make that remark?

Dr. Binder: I said, Western influences on the *nusach*. I say, to you my colleagues, if the hazzan understands the hazzanut in America he must take the Occident in the audience and blend the old tradition with beautiful harmonization that's what I call synagogue music.

(Session was concluded at this point due to the lateness of the hour.)

FOURTEENTH ANNUAL MEETING CANTORS ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

Executive session for members and wives.

Hazzan Isaac Wall, Chairman
President, Cantors Assembly of America
Har Zion Temple, Philadelphia, Pa.

Hazzan Pinchas Spiro, Secretary
Recording Secretary
Mt. Airy Congregation, Philadelphia, Pa.

WEST COAST REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan Herman Hammerman, Chairman

The West Coast Region had a bit of rejuvenation this year. We gained new members, men who show promise of action and enthusiasm. We are also expecting to increase our membership this year with the continued growth of new small Congregations.

The big shot in the arm this year, was a visit, last July by Sam Rosenbaum. We needed the visit and we hope that it will be repeated *bimheira beyameinu*.

The West Coast Region backed the National Executive Board in their negotiations with United Synagogue. We intend to run two concerts in June to raise money for the Assembly. Our relations with United Synagogue locally, and with the University of Judaism continue in excellent manner. Anything which concerns the Cantorate, including placement is referred to our attention. In fact, we met in committee with Dr. Samuel Dinin, Dean of the University of Judaism, and are working out plans which will be of great benefit to both the Cantorate and the community.

Therefore, we are looking forward to a 1961 of real promise.

NEW ENGLAND REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan David Chasman, Chairman

It is always a source of great satisfaction to report the accomplishments of the New England Regional Branch. Our achievements for the year 1960-61 encompass the areas of music, community service organizational activity and culture, and social activity.

Music: A very fine regional choir has been organized under the very capable tutelage of Professor Solomon G. Braslavsky, musical director at Temple Mishkan Tefillah of Newton, Mass. This year we devoted ourselves to the study of liturgical music, concentrating upon the work of the late Zavel Zilberts, emphasizing the following composition : *Heyeh Im Pifyos, Aheynu, Yismekhu, and Borukh El Elyon.*

Community Service: At this year's opening campaign banquet of the Jewish Philanthropies of Greater Boston and the UJA, our regional choir, under the direction of Prof. Braslavsky, presented a musical program featuring Zilbert's compositions. At the \$100 a plate JNF dinner, Hazzan Michal Hammerman of Temple Kehillath Israel, Brookline, Mass., rendered an overwhelmingly successful musical program. During Jewish Music Month, many of our colleagues were called upon to demonstrate liturgical music and Jewish folk music, and I am proud to say they succeeded in bringing stature to the Hazzan and Hazzanut.

Organizational Activity and Culture: A highlight of each meeting is a presentation and discussion of some aspect of Hazzanut, or similar areas of our culture. In addition to discussions of the regular business of our region, great concern has been displayed for the affairs of our national organization. In June, 1960, a special meeting was called for the purpose of evaluating the national convention of that year. A resolution was unanimously adopted expressing a hearty *y'asher koah* to the Convention Chairman, Hazzan Saul Meisels, to his committee and to the national officers for the high standards of the 1960 Convention program. On November 3, 1960, our region adopted a resolution supporting the position and the action of the Executive Council in their attempt at evolving a satisfactory relationship between the Cantors Assembly and the United Syna-

gogue. With great pride I can report that almost every member of our region has demonstrated his concern for the Cantors Institute. This is well evidenced by the fact that this year, 80% of our members have contributed a total of \$5,381.00 to the Cantors Institute.

Social Activity : The wonderful feeling of chaver-shaft among our members was well demonstrated at our Hanukkah party which was held at our headquarters in the Associated Synagogue Building of Greater Boston.

In closing I am happy to have the opportunity to publicly express my deep appreciation to our regional secretary, Hazzan Irving Kischel, of Temple Shalom, Milton, Mass. and to all the members of our region who have contributed so much to the success of this year's activities.

PHILADELPHIA REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan Yehuda Mandel, Chairman

It is with a great deal of pride and satisfaction that I have, for the fifth or sixth time in the ten years since I am a member of the Cantors Assembly, the privilege to report to you about the Philadelphia Region. The life of our Region, organizationally, professionally and socially is quite an involved one. It may be due to the fact that we are, through the several members of our Region who are active members of the Board, intensely involved and most intimately familiar with the values of our work, and in return with the benefits of organized professional life. The activities of our Region in the past year are manifold.

Organizationally, we are a well organized group of 35 active and 10 prospective members. Of the 10 prospective members, the applications of two are now under consideration in our membership committee and we hope they will soon also be full-fledged members. Our membership is keenly aware of the value and benefits of our organization. Professionally, we are recognized in all phases of communal life as clergymen. We share the pastoral work and duties in different institutions of our community as associate Chaplains with the Rabbis of the community. Our social activities are monthly get-togethers as guests of one of our colleagues. Financially, we strive to triple or quadruple our contribution to the Cantors Institute for the first time this year. So far, our ensemble gave two concerts. One more in Philadelphia, and two more in Wilkes-Barre and Reading respectively are scheduled. A third in Allentown, all Pennsylvania, is a possibility. It is to our great satisfaction and honor that this year the choral ensemble of the Philadelphia Region was chosen to represent the part of traditional European Cantorate at one of the concerts at this Convention.

The past year some changes in position occurred. We are happy with our colleagues who have come into our community. We, through our activities and direct contacts try to make them feel at home, and their reaction is favorable and most remarkable. Also, the year brought honor and recognition of two colleagues in their respective Congregations. Cantor Nathan Chaitovsky was just recently honored by his Congregation,

Temple Sinai, on the occasion of his first decade of affiliation with them. Our colleagues partook in the festivities by their presence, and participation of our choral ensemble. In addition, yours truly celebrated his tenth anniversary at Congregation Beth Judah of Logan. It is since the last Convention that we sorrowfully recognize the demise of two of our beloved colleagues, Hazzanim Joseph Mann and Solomon Winter who left us in the last year. May their memories be an inspiration to all of us.

CHICAGO REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan Robert Zalkin, Chairman

The Chicago Region has met twice this year. Since most of the social and cultural activity for cantors of this area is conducted by a local "non-denominational" cantors association, we have limited ourselves to business matters.

The Chicago Region wishes to place itself on record as enthusiastically endorsing the actions of the Executive Council with regard to relations with the United Synagogue.

CONNECTICUT REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan Elcaxar Bernstein, Chairman

The 10th year of the existence of the Connecticut Regional Branch was a quiet year as far as activities were concerned. For nine full years our organization devoted itself to many activities. However, our main concern all these years was to fulfill our pledges to maintain and assist the Cantors Institute through many concerts and other means in our communities. The many rehearsals, which required of some of us to travel many miles each time ; the fund raising campaigns took so much of our valuable time that it was felt by all members that we need and deserve a rest. Therefore at the first meeting last Fall a "sabbatical" year was declared for the Choir Ensemble. This did not stop the regional meetings of our organization which were devoted to business and social affairs. This sabbatical year did not stop either individual cantors raising funds through concerts to which they invited soloists, or other groups using other means.

This coming year, the Connecticut Region, unbroken in its solidary spirit, will do its best in making Connecticut again the exemplary group of dedicated and devoted men in our great cause.

TRI STATE REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan Abraham J. Denburg, Chairman

The following are our great accomplishments during the past year:

1. Four Meetings were held in Detroit, Akron, Cleveland and Toledo respectively.
2. Culture has continued to dominate as our primary aim and goal. We witnessed an excellent Detroit Cantors Choral concert directed by Dan Frohman, dissertation on Bel Canto, Hazzanic Studies by

Hazzan Max Wohlberg and Nusach of the Haggadah by Hazzan Reuben Frankel, Hazzanim Meisels, Fenakel and Ulman helped make our meetings a great success.

3. Unpublished manuscripts are distributed and studied at meetings.
4. Hazzan Simon Bermanis was honored by our region at a special dinner tendered by the Jewish National Fund of Cleveland. The Jewish community of Cleveland was profoundly impressed with our spirit, unity and Hazzanic solidarity.
5. An assessment of \$5.00 annually to help us with cultural programs has been of outstanding value to each and every member.
6. Resolutions unanimously passed to support the position of our National Executive Council was adopted in October of 1960 and in March 1961 we pledged a resolution of loyalty to be presented for adoption by the entire membership.
7. The Campaign is going strong. To date we have raised more than \$4,000.00

METROPOLITAN REGIONAL BRANCH

Hazzan Benjamin Siegel, Chairman

We, of the Metropolitan Region are proud to report, to our colleagues of the Assembly that we are in the process of culminating a season successfully in many various projects. Our meetings have been attended by some forty colleagues and this has been a great asset to attaining our goals.

1. The Ensemble very ably conducted this year by Richard Newman scheduled for ten concerts, has been meeting with tremendous success. They will make at least two LP records this year. There is discussion going on at the present time as to having the Ensemble appear on television.

2. We have successfully effected closer relationships with the Metropolitan Council, and look forward to elevating and benefiting the status of the Assembly through this relationship.

3. We are sponsoring a Kinus on the subject of "Prayer and Chant, its place in history and its relevancy today". Hazzanim Nathan Mendelson and Max Wohlberg will participate in this Kinus which is being supervised by its originator, Sol Mendelson.

4. We are projecting for the following year, a series of lectures in conjunction with a possible Town Hall recital.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the men of the Region for their assistance and cooperation in making all these things possible.

CENTRAL SEABOARD REGIONAL BRANCH

. Hazzan Morris I. Okun, Chairman

A meeting of the members of the Central Seaboard Region was held in Richmond, Virginia on Tuesday, March 14th, 1961, which was attended by the following:

Paul Grob of Portsmouth, Va.

Bernard Matlin of Norfolk, Va.

Sol Wechsler of Norfolk, Va.

Morris I. Okun of Richmond, Va.

After a lengthy discussion, it was the concensus of opinion to recommend the dissolution of this Region as it is now constituted. Perhaps a Baltimore-Washington Region might prove successful, but Virginia does not have sufficient Hazzanim to make up a region.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Hazzan David Brodsky, Chairman

This year our Membership Committee was enlarged to include the following Hazzanim: Yehudah L. Mandel and Kurt Silvermann.

As our first order of business the Membership Committee drew up a revised set of procedures for the acceptance of new member applications and new members.

Upon the receipt of an application from a prospective member, the Chairman of the Region in which the man lives is contacted for a written report on the man's ability, character, etc. Only after this, is the Executive Council asked to act on an application.

The Committee revised, as well, the examination given to prospective members. Instead of one examination we now have three sets of examinations which we vary with each applicant.

The Committee proposes to the Convention that we change the requirement of two years service in a bona-fide congregation to three years service in order that we may be more certain of the competence of the men who apply to us for membership.

I am grateful to my colleagues of the Committee for their efforts and support.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

This has been a busy year for the Publications Committee,

We republished, exclusively for our members, the fine collection of hazzanic recitatives by Cantor Gershon Shaposhnik of Istanbul. All who have seen the work have nothing but the highest praise for it.

We have negotiated with a number of publishers for the ultimate publication of a definitive work of the music of Solomone DeRossi. It is our hope to be able to announce the publication details in the very near future.

In cooperation with the Convention Committee, the Publication Committee authorized the commissioning of 15 new works for the Synagogue. These works will be heard at the Tuesday evening Concert and will be published as a joint venture between the Cantors Assembly of America, Mills Music, Inc. and the composers.

We began this year to publish the heretofore unpublished works of the late Zavel Zilberts. Available at this Convention are three publications for Friday Evening by Zilberts, published by arrangement between the Cantors Assembly and Transcontinental Music. The compositions are *Kaddish*, *Mogen Ovos* and *R'tzeh*.

Initial negotiations have been started for the publication of the unpublished manuscripts for Sabbath and Festivals of the renowned Hazzan Boruch Schorr.

Under the new redaction of Hazzan Charles Davidson two issues of the *Cantors Voice* have appeared this year.

For the Publication Committee
Hazzan Samuel Rosenbaum

REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

TUESDAY, APRIL 18, 1961

Hazzan Samuel Rosenbaum
Temple Beth El, Rochester, New York

My dear colleagues and friends:

Time was, when on the day of Bar Mitzvah, a parent would symbolically cut the cord that tied the young man to his family with the recitation of *Barukh Shep'tarani*. To me it always seemed a barbaric benediction. But after all, a custom is most realistically assessed in the light of its time.

Our parents and grandparents perhaps had little choice in the matter. The realities of life were such that this ceremonial disavowal, of further responsibility was more symbolic, it was a harsh statement of the facts of life. After Bar Mitzvah the young man learned soon to assume the burdens, the responsibilities and the anguish of grown ups.

Today, times are different and so are the customs. In most synagogues the *Barukh Shep'tarani* has been replaced by a more appropriate *brakha*.

Parents do not delude themselves that they have fulfilled their responsibilities with Bar Mitzvah. Indeed, if anything, the real responsibilities only begin then.

And so we have replaced the brusque good-riddance *brakha* with a benediction whose overtones are softer, warmer; one that expresses gratitude to God for achievements to this point and intimates a hope that God's goodness will continue to be extended to Bar Mitzvah and parent alike.

Of the two I think I would infinitely more prefer this newer point of view than the older one. It is the spirit of gratitude and hope which should prevail here today as we prepare to review our first Post-Bar Mitzvah year and I ask you to rise and to join with me in giving thanks for the strength, the loyalty and the determination which has enabled us to reach this day.

Barukh ata Adonai Eloheinu melekh ha-olam She-he-ch-yanu Vekiymanu Vehigianu laz'man hazeh.

Only if we repudiate the philosophy of *Barukh Shep'tarani* can this report-and indeed all of our activities have meaning and reason. I hope that what follows will give us all additional reason to be glad that we chose the *Shehecheyanu*.

It is not easy to compress all the activity of the Assembly over the past year into such reasonable length as will not unduly tax either the spirit or the flesh. I will, however, make the attempt and I hope that you will bear with me.

One further request: This is a report of the work of a nation-wide organization. One whose goals were ably set-down by our founders. We have moved closer to the achievement of these goals, though we as individual hazzanim in individual congregations may find the progress difficult to chart in our own lives.

And this is just the point. In dealing with the Assembly at year's end it is necessary to forget for a moment our own problems as individuals and concentrate rather on the successes, the defeats and **the unresolved** problems which we share in common. To this must be added the important perspective of history.

In terms of man's history on earth and his struggle to learn to live in peace with fellow man, our existence is as nothing. As Jews who boast a history of 4000 years we can hardly be impressed with a record of 13 years. As members of a movement almost 70 years old we are still very, very young. But because our efforts have been based on the achievements of all of these we have made tremendous strides and in the course of this report--and this convention I hope you will have many, many reasons to agree and to feel proud.

While I ask you to assume an overall and historic perspective, I don't want you to think that the individual problems were alien to us or of no concern.

Over the past 12 months more than 80 of you brought to my attention individual, personal problems. These ranged from parsonage questions, social security, placement, rabbi-hazzan problems, hazzan-congregation problems, personal counselling and many others. In a great majority of these cases I met personally with you. Some, where distance prevented it, were handled over the telephone and through the mail.

Only time will tell whether my advice was good or bad, but I found that what a colleague in trouble needs more than advice is a willing and friendly ear. From your warm letters to me I feel that at least that was always available to you.

Over this last year I met personally with almost a dozen lay-committees from congregations where our members were experiencing some difficulty. Of these 10 problems were amicably resolved. In two cases our colleagues are resigning--but even in those we have won at least a partial victory in that both men will leave only *when*, and if we are able to place them in new positions.

And it is hardly a secret that in none of the twelve was *the case of the balebatim* all bad and the case of the colleague all white.

In the course of the last year I was able finally to make a long delayed and much needed visit to our colleagues on the West Coast. I am pleased and proud to report that they received me warmly. We had an all-day conference at Abe Salkov's congregation where we were able to root out the differences that had arisen between us over the years. Their genuine renewed interest in, and concern for the Assembly has been evidenced once again in the gradually increasing financial support and in the most welcome and wholehearted moral support we have been receiving from them since that time.

I cannot fail to point out that this most welcome change of heart was brought about-to a degree--by the yeomen work of Hi Hammerman, Abe Salkov, Nate Katzman, Julie Blackman and many others. They lead well organized and busy groups of hazzanim in whom we can well take pride.

I learned a great deal from my visit with these men and I hope that in the year ahead more of our leadership will be given the opportunity to visit with this important group of men. Strengthening the lines of communication and friendship which we re-established this year should be a must in our order of business.

In the last few days we received the tragic news of the passing of Joe Cysner our revered colleague from San Diego. If, for nothing more, I am grateful for my visit to the West in that it afforded me to spend some time with him. He came up from San Diego and spent the better part of a day with me. I had a first hand opportunity to talk with this truly devoted and gentle human being--to meet his lovely wife Sylvia and to encourage him in a difficult moment in his career.

It is a small but nevertheless real comfort that the C.A. provided the means of bringing to a happy conclusion an intolerable situation which had been disturbing Joe for many months.

I permit myself to report this to you because Joe himself asked me to do so. He wanted every colleague to understand that the only hope for ourselves and for our profession lay in what we ourselves did for ourselves and in how we ourselves looked at ourselves. In a telephone call from San Diego his wife reminded me, last week, of his devotion to his profession and to his colleagues. She sent her thanks to all of us for an offer or assistance which we extended to her and expressed her gratitude over our concern for her.

Above and beyond the area of personal problems was the ongoing business of the Assembly.

On June 6th, 1960 we began to plan again this convention. Since that day the entire committee met six times to evaluate the work of various sub-committees. Most of us attended 14 sub-committee meetings in order to be able to call this convention to order. I will not take to evaluate the work of various sub-committees. Most of us attended 14 sub-committee meetings in order to be able to call this convention to order. I will not take the time to list all the names of men involved in preparing this convention. Enough to say that 20 colleagues prepared it; over 50 colleagues will participate in it and almost 700 members and guests will leave here on Thursday saying that it is the best convention they ever attended.

But in back of every successful enterprise there is one man without whom the enterprise would never get off the ground. One man who provides the spark, the energy and the drive on which all the others can draw. As he was for our last convention, Saul Meisels is that man for this one too.

The Hazzan of one of the largest and most active congregations in the country, a concert artist of stature, a creative musician, yet somehow he found the strength and the time to fill this convention program to the

bursting point. When occasionally we begged him to plan for a little less of this or that-to save some ideas for next year the answer was in good Jewish tradition-We must plan this convention as though it is the last one--only then will it be right. If each year's chairman acts on that premise we will never fail to have an outstanding convention.

Let me move on.

The life blood of our profession is music. It was the feeling of your officers that we owed it to ourselves and to the future to make certain that it would be preserved and enriched. Much to our credit, this particular year, filled as it has been with great, philosophical and practical problems having to do with the very survival of our Assembly, in this difficult year we proceeded with our publications activities: We did not permit our external problems to distract us from one of the most meaningful goals which we have set before us.

We printed, at a minimum cost, on a non-profit basis and strictly for our members the Anthology of hazzanic recitatives by a true master of Nusah and Hazzanut, Gershon Schaposchnik of Istanbul. By dint of careful planning and bargaining we were able to make the volume available to our members (and through them to some friends) at a minimum cost, at the same time without the investment of large sums of money for long periods of time.

The Schayoschnik volume was printed, bound, packed and mailed to all of our members for under \$700. To date, because of the exemplary cooperation on the part of members who paid immediately for their copies, we have collected almost \$600. Our outstanding credits will more than cover our cost. We still have about 100 volumes available to those members who would like to purchase them as extra copies, organists' copies, etc.

It is our hope that we will continue to dig out such priceless volumes and repeat the process. We have heard nothing but praise from all of you on this project.

Not content to keep alive our stored musical treasures, we proceeded this year on another aspect of our publication program.

For the first time in the history of hazzanut the performers of sacred music have gone to the composers with specific commissions for badly needed works.

We approached 15 leading composers for the synagogue-among them 3 distinguished colleagues-to create for us long needed new settings to texts which have up to now been largely ignored by composers. Again with a minimum of expenditure and with the cooperation of the composers and Mills Music Inc., we can come to you today with 15 new compositions for cantor, cantor-choir, and cantor choir and organ.

This evening we shall be privileged to hear this music in its world premiere performance by an especially prepared chorus under the direction of Lazar Weiner and featuring as hazzanic soloists a number of talented and devoted colleagues.

Displayed in this very room are the printed copies of each of the works ready and available for you.

The cost-a token honorarium to each composer.

The profit-1. The continuity of Jewish musical tradition-2. the encouragement of devoted composers-3. the casting of new light on the music of the Festivals and the Holy Days and 4. tachlis-a share in the royalties which these compositions are sure to earn.

When all the placement problems and the disputes and the parsonage requests have all been forgotten-when it no longer matters to any of us in this room whether the congregation bulletin carries our names in large or in small letters, these works will remain to remind our children's children of our devotion and our faith in the future.

And still another publication project has been launched this year. Upon the death of the late Zavel Zilberts, the Cantors Assembly acquired from the widow the unpublished manuscripts of his estate. After two years of editing, organizing and arranging by our devoted colleague, Jack Kleinberg, and after some additional work by our good friend, Eric Mandell, the Cantors Assembly in conjunction with Transcontinental Music this week published the first three of what we hope will be a long series of posthumously published Zilberts' compositions. They are the Kaddish, the Mogen Ovos and the R'tze from the Friday Evening Service, And they too are here on display awaiting your inspection and we are sure your purchase.

We are pleased and proud to be associated with two fine publishing houses in these ventures. As with the commissioning series, the Cantors Assembly will earn the resulting royalties.

In these projects the Cantors Assembly has, I believe, realized its true functions: not so much to publish music-but rather to instigate its publication by the publishers in the field. To unearth old works, to commission new ones, to reprint unavailable ones without an undue expenditure of funds.

It is no secret that the Cantors Assembly continues its close interest in and support of the Cantors Institute of the J.T.S. of A. Last year, under the leadership of Moses Silverman, we raised a record \$33,000. It took great energy and great devotion on the part of all of our colleagues to achieve this. Last year in addition to the great sum raised, we were able to see a noticeable rise in the number of men who participated in raising this sum.

We were justly proud of our achievement — proud not only of the 10% it would earn for us but proud as well of what this record would mean to the Seminary and our Movement, engaged as they were in ever-increasing fund raising campaign.

In our enthusiasm a number of us met with important Seminary officials on details of a program that could, if properly handled, bring in two \$50,000 scholarships for the Cantors Institute.

You all know what happened — the bottom dropped out of everything. In the light of our relationship with United Synagogue about which I will speak in detail in a moment, there was a serious questioning of the wisdom of continuing a campaign in the face of the apparent apathy by our movement to our needs and to our legitimate aspirations.

While I can appreciate the feelings of those who want now to slacken support of the Cantors Institute, I must nevertheless point out the following:

The Cantors Institute and by that I mean future of hazzanut in America — cannot be permitted to die. Whatever the provocation — this school and what it means to us is too precious to become a football. Do we want a school any less because this official or that official is not as interested in us or in the school as we might want?

I think we need more support for the school — not less. Not because it will buy us favors, but rather because a strong school is one way of keeping hazzanim in the synagogues.

More than support, we also need to know and to have some voice in the progress and development of the school. And we need to develop a closer tie between us and the men whom we will someday welcome as colleagues.

To that end, I propose the establishment of a competent committee to make a thorough study of the curriculum, the goals, the achievements and the faculty of the school. I further propose that this study be a thorough and painstaking one and that if necessary, competent professional assistance be engaged to help us in this study.

After the results of such a study has been carefully weighed, we will be in a better position to make practical, serious and meaningful suggestions to the school on how it can be strengthened and improved.

Toward that end a preliminary committee should be appointed to meet with the Director of the School to enlist his aid and cooperation.

Before I turn to the remaining, major section of my report I must take, the time to say a few words about some of the men who made possible the record I have just reported to you.

I have already spoken of the devotion of Saul Meisels, Moses Silverman and have at least called your attention to the many colleagues whose names grace our convention program, but I would be remiss were I not to point out and applaud the work of the man to whom we entrust the entire convention, once it is called to order. I refer of course, to the Chairman of the Convention Management Committee-Harry Weinberg. Quietly, efficiently he sat with us as we planned each detail and quietly and efficiently he assumes and carries out the tremendously important but basically tedious and unglamorous job of seeing to it that all of our pretty plans work out. For his work, for his shunning of the spotlight, for his friendship we are all grateful. We are in his debt beyond repayment.

I have left one man for last and in truest sense in his case it is **acharon, acharon, chaviv**.

As you already know, and as you will yet hear, the last two years of the Cantors Assembly have been the most exciting-and the most frustrating, the most gratifying and the most disappointing, the most meaningful and the most wasteful in our history.

That we are met here today—that we have forged ahead—that we can look to the future is due in no

small measure to the single minded devotion of a rare, warm and genuine human being. People are often deceived by his mildness and his easy manner, but I can tell you that it took great resources of strength and determination for our President to lead us as he has done. He displayed a stubbornness, a determination and as imperviousness to intimidation that strengthened us all.

Isaac Wall has guided us through two difficult years with courage and distinction and at great personal cost. We permit him to step down from his high post only because we know that he will continue to be with us and to work with us as in the past, in the years that lie ahead.

May the Almighty grant him and all his loved ones continued good health and success and continued opportunities for service to colleague and to fellow man.

We must come now to the most important section of this report-and I daresay the most important of any statement which I have been privileged to make before you since I first became active in the leadership of our Assembly some 10 years ago.

Some of you have been nice enough to tell me in the past that you have found inspiration, some new insight -some encouragement in what I have had to say. I hope that what follows will prove to be no exception.

Be that as it may, whatever the results, I can tell you that preparing this section of my report was one of the most difficult tasks I have encountered in all the years of my activity in behalf of our Assembly.

I want to share my difficulty with you and perhaps in that way you will better understand and digest what I must say.

In discussing with you our relationships with the United Synagogue of America over the last two years-the subject to which I will now address myself I-and the officers and members of the Executive Council found ourselves faced with a most delicate and difficult situation.

On the one hand we find ourselves with the first opportunity in a year to talk face to face to a great number of colleagues. An opportunity to open our hearts-I was going to say let down our hair-and to lay before you the entire narrative of our negotiations with the United Synagogue. And yet to do it in such a way that there will be not the slightest question or doubt-not only in the minds of our members-but in the minds of the leaders of the United Synagogue-and indeed the whole Conservative movement that we intend, on the one hand, to pursue the achievement of our simple and just goals and on the other hand to make clear that the achievement of these goals by the Cantors Assembly will in no sense be construed as a defeat for the United Synagogue, nor will it in any shape, form or manner imply a diminution, by even one iota, of our respect, affection, loyalty and devotion to each and every arm of the Conservative Movement-the United Synagogue included.

But I am determined to make a stab nevertheless at accomplishing both purposes with a minimum of rancor or emotion or abuse.

Let me say it simply.

Everything in our 13 year history, everything that any officer or leader or committee of our Assembly has said or done has been in the interest and the service of the American Jewish Community in general and the Conservative Movement in particular. Our record is clear and incontrovertible on that score. Slowly but surely even the most reluctant of affiliates in the Movement have conceded that we are here to stay, that we have brought order, dignity, status, achievement and a spirit of dedication to our profession and through the renaissance of our profession to the all American Jewry School.

We are proud and happy that our lot has fallen in this movement in particular. We believe it has the potential to lead American Jewry to realize its great strength and its magnificent inherent possibilities.

We cannot conceive of a future American Jewish community where our Movement will play anything but a leading role.

We cannot conceive of a future Conservative Judaism without the continual vitality of the Seminary, the Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue. By the same token we cannot conceive that any of these three great arms of the movement, even for a moment considers the possibility of a Conservative movement without a Cantors Assembly.

Our history and their histories bear this out.

To admit this-and to admit it proudly-does not deny us, however, the privilege of differing on particular issues with one or two or even three of these arms of Conservatism. In the past we have had differences with all of them. Some of these have been resolved, some still remain festering. Some will some day be resolved-some may never.

Nevertheless we continue to work together for the greater good.

The sad fact is today that we have a very serious difference with one of these great arms-the United Synagogue of America. It is a difference of some standing, a difference which has caused a good deal of bitterness and unhappiness to both of us. I am certain that the United Synagogue does not enjoy this any more than we do.

The sad fact is also that as you heard last night and as you have heard from the members of the Educators Assembly we are not alone in differing with the United Synagogue.

We did not arrange for these differences to occur simultaneously. The growth and vitality of our movement is giving us growing pains and in our progress forward all of us are experiencing new drives, seeing new goals and reaching out for new horizons. It is a period of ferment and change.

Despite the variety of these differences one basic principle divides us, as it does the Rabbinical Assembly and the Educators Assembly from the United Synagogue.

The United Synagogue expresses through its lay and professional leadership the point of view that it must control the operation of the professional organizations

of the movement in order to truly serve the best interests of the Congregations of our movement.

The professional organizations through their leadership take the stand that they can only serve the movement if they are reasonably free and independent to carry out the high goals of their profession and their professional organizations. Further, that it is the sacred duty of the Jewish professional to set the goals and the standards for the lay people and not vice-versa, that the rabbi by dint of training and tradition is the source of authority in Jewish law, the Hazzan by training and tradition is the source of authority in Jewish music, and so on.

This seems like a simple principle which should be fairly easy to understand. After all laymen accept this principle in their individual congregations, why not on the national scene?

We have-as has the Rabbinical Assembly and the Educators Assembly, been sometimes called a trade union. All of us, of course, have denied this accusation. We have pointed out that we are professionals engaged in sacred work that unlike the trade union we are interested not only in Cantors but in hazzanut-in the profession and its growth and strength.

But let me tell you. I'm not so sure that it isn't time we began to realize that if Cantors do not speak up for Cantors, who will? If we do not command the power to back up a colleague-who will?

And this is the crux of the whole matter. We demand the right to speak for our colleagues in all matters pertaining to their welfare and to the welfare of our profession, and the one area where this voice is most meaningful is in the area of placement.

We demand for ourselves the right, as it is enjoyed by the Rabbinical Assembly, and as it is being demanded by the Educators Assembly to deal directly with the congregations served by our members in all matters affecting their placement, their security and their welfare. We demand the right to be known and to be pointed out as the source of knowledge and authority in the field of hazzanut and Jewish music.

Thirdly, we demand the right to financial and moral sustenance from the movement we serve, financial and moral sustenance which we need to equip ourselves better to service this movement.

And lastly, we demand from the movement we serve the recognition we have earned-a place in the movement which will permit us to exist, to live, to work and to carry out those goals-those plans which we, by dint of training and experience, know are so badly needed by American Jewry.

Somewhere, somehow must be found the formula by which these simple goals can be achieved peacefully and happily.

If you feel as do your officers-and I believe I speak their will, then from this body of men must come the strength to support us. From this Convention must come, if you will it, such a display of unity and determination that there will be no doubt in the mind of anyone that we mean not to be swerved from the peaceful

and honorable achievement of these simple and just goals-

I-Freedom to operate as an autonomous professional organization within the framework of Conservative Judaism.

Z-Freedom to represent our colleagues in whatever dealings with their congregations they choose to delegate to us.

3-The Financial and moral encouragement of our movement in the growth and expansion of our Assembly and its activities.

Im tirzu en zo agada-We can achieve if we but will it.

Now is the time to lift our voices.

NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Hazzan W. Belskin Ginsberg, Chairman

The Nominations Committee presented the following slate of officers for the year 1961-62, which was unanimously elected by acclamation.

President,	Moses J. Silverman
Vice President,	Saul Meisels
Executive Vice President,	Samuel Rosenbaum
Secretary,	Pinchas Spiro
Treasurer,	Arthur Koret

In addition to the slate presented by the Nominations Committee for membership on the Executive Council there were also several nominations from the floor.

The following were elected to the Executive Council:

For 2 year terms :

Sam Seidelman
Kurt Silberman

For 3 year terms:

Charles Bloch
David Leon
Sol Mendelson

Hazzan Moshe Nathanson was elected to membership on the Executive Council *Ex Officio* by acclamation.

It was moved, seconded and unanimously approved that henceforth the Nominations Committee shall make its report in writing to the membership at least one month prior to the Convention.

Members of the Nominations Committee : David Brodsky, Abe Denburg, Yehuda Mandel, Gregor Sherkhan; W. Belskin Ginsburg, *Chairman*.

DINNER SESSION

Presentation of
Campaign Award
to
Hazzan Moses J. Silverman
Anshe Emed Synagogue, Chicago, Illinois
by
Rabbi David Kogen
Director, Cantor's institute

REMARKS BY RABBI DAVID C. KOGEN

My dear friends, I bring you greetings from Doctor Louis Finkelstein, Chancellor of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America and Doctor Hugo Weisgall, Chairman of the Faculty of the Cantors Institute. I also have been asked to convey to you best wishes from the Faculty and students of the Cantors Institute-Seminary College of Jewish Music. All of us hope that the deliberations at this convention will help to strengthen the creative, artistic, and traditional elements of our congregations in the United States and Canada.

This is the fourteenth annual convention of the Cantors Assembly, but the theme this week could easily be a phrase from the Passover Hagadah: *Sh'lsha Asar Mi Yodea?* The answer as suggested by the current issue of *Hadoar* is the thirteen years of the State of Israel. This is the Bar Mitzvah of the State of Israel, and all of us are reminded that we have a portion and responsibility in the upbuilding of Israel. We rejoice in the Bar Mitzvah of the third Jewish Commonwealth as we would rejoice in the Bar Mitzvah of our own son. Yet there is one very significant difference between what we say today and what we would say at the Bar Mitzvah of our son.

In *Bercshit Rabbah, Parasha Toldot*, we read Rabbi Elazar's statement that a man must look after his son until the boy becomes thirteen years of age. After that the father may say, "Blessed be He who has freed me from the responsibility for this child."

Today's fathers know that they must continue to be responsible for their Bar Mitzvah boys. We, too, know that we must continue to share responsibility for our brothers in Israel.

The members of the Cantors Assembly also regard the Cantors Institute as a father looks at his son, with pride and love and a continued sense of responsibility.

This evening I would like to charter a new imaginary fraternity, the A.A.A. or the Azariah Association of America.

Why this name? And what does the new fraternity represent? For the answer to these questions we must turn to the second *Mishnah* in the first chapter of *Zevachim*. There we read "Simeon the brother of Azariah said . . ."

Why "the brother of Azariah"? Why should Simeon be identified in this unusual manner, rather than be called "the son of ____." The Bartenura explained that Simeon and Azariah were two brothers who made

a very special agreement between them : Azariah would become a business man and out of his earnings would support Simeon who would study Torah. It was further agreed between them that Azariah would share with Simeon the credit for studying Torah in the world to come. Azariah, then, made it possible for Simeon to study, and this is what made Azariah important enough for Simeon to be called the brother of Azariah.

Now, you can see why I call the new Fraternity A.A.A., the Azariah Association of America. These are the men who make it possible for others to study Torah. In previous years a special campaign award has been presented to Hazzan Charles Sudock and to Hazzan Arthur Koret for what they have done in behalf of the Cantors Institute campaign. They were the first two members of my imaginary fraternity, the Azariah Association of America. Tonight, it is our privilege to honor the third and newest member of the Azariah Fraternity, Hazzan Moses J. Silverman.

Hazzan Silverman has served with great distinction at The Anshe Emet Synagogue in Chicago for the past twenty-two years. We know him as a personable and well-liked colleague who has been vice-president of the Cantors Assembly and chairman of the Cantors Institute campaign. And, just today, he has been honored by the members of this Assembly by being elected to the highest office in the Assembly. It is my pleasure this evening to present this award to Hazzan Silverman and to welcome him to the Azariah Association of America. I pray that during his term of office as president of the Cantors Assembly we will witness "love, brotherhood, peace and good fellowship." Amen!

RESPONSE

**Hazzan Moses J. Silverman
1961 Recipient Campaign Award**

Rabbi Kogen, Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen :

I am truly grateful for this award, and yet, in all frankness, I must share it with so many. First of all, there are the splendid results obtained in previous years in fund raising for the Cantors Institute to inspire me-the years before my undertaking the task of Campaign Chairman.

I must mention the outstanding efforts of such men as my immediate predecessor, Arthur Koret, who was the deserving recipient of this award just a year ago. We owe a debt of gratitude to Rabbi Kogen, the Director of the Cantors Institute, for his ever constant co-operation, and to Mr. Greenwald and the members of his staff for their assistance. We shall need even more of it in the future.

Then, too, there was the supreme effort of you, my colleagues in the Cantors Assembly, who succeeded in breaking all previous records in fund raising for the Cantors Institute last year and will, I hope, exceed that achievement this year. Surely this accomplishment is an indication of how warm and close is our feeling to the Jewish Theological Seminary and how great we consider our obligation to the Cantors Institute. Most of all, dear friends, I want to convey to you that fund

raising depends a great deal upon the cause. Our cause, the enrichment of Jewish life and prayer is certainly worthy of our best and constant efforts. On that score no more words from me are necessary.

The Cantors Institute is our responsibility and we must continue to do everything in our power to see to it that the school maintains its high standards. It must never lack for funds. As your Campaign chairman these last two years, I have not been unaware of the problems that many of you encountered, since I experienced the same ones. I do hope to submit to my successor a few ideas which I trust will bring a new approach to fund raising for our school. But I repeat-no matter how we raise the money, we must continue to raise it.

To those informed and interested lay people, many of whom are here, and who, in fact, represent men and women of similar spirit all over our country, we express our appreciation not only for their material contribution, but for their wisdom and understanding, which are so vital to our progress. They, as we of the Cantors Assembly, are linked with that great school of learning, the Jewish Theological Seminary, with which we are so very proud to be affiliated.

To insure the continued success and growth of our Cantors Institute, we will strive for an even closer association with the Jewish Theological Seminary and their capable staff. The welfare of our school is the welfare of the Cantors Assembly. The continued growth of our school is the continued growth of the Cantors Assembly.

THE PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hazzan Isaac Wall

My Dear Friends,

This night is very special for me as I think this convention is for all of us. On this night I shift from the presidency to the comfortable and status satisfying position of past President. There are mixed feelings connected with this transfer-reluctance to step down from a position of honor and trust; relief over the prospect that past presidents do not have to make speeches; regret that I accomplished so little compared to what I had aspired to; gratitude to the many people who made it possible for the Cantors Assembly to continue to grow and mature. Symbolically I hand the gavel of office over to my successor with the feeling that he will preside over a stronger, more confident, more disciplined and increasingly maturing organization. **Ya-amdu el habrakha.** This is due very little to my efforts as compared to the efforts of a handful of our colleagues who in my eyes and in yours are servant of our praise.

I tip my heart in gratitude and recognition for the yeoman work performed by our executive vice-president. He has been most effective in sustaining and upholding the essential self-respect, strength and position of the Cantors Assembly. We know that in some circles he may have been unpopular, but this only increased his worth to the Cantors Assembly. It was easy to be president with Sam as executive vice president. A future generation of Hazzanim will someday honor him

for the service he provides and has provided. I pray that the good Lord will listen with approval when he sends his petitions towards Him. May He bless him as he has blessed us with him.

To Saul Meisels and Harry Weinberg go our gratitude for making this first "Post Bar-Mitzvah" Convention so successful. I have no doubts that you agree that they are to be commended.

To Pinchas Spiro a very special thanks for the highly effective and devoted execution of his office of secretary. I hope that he will have great events to record during the coming year.

To all the committee chairmen and the members of the Cantors Assembly humble thanks from one whom the presidency has taught the true value of the individual member and his cooperation.

It is permissible today for presidents to speak of new frontiers. I would like with your permission to turn our thoughts toward the future. The past year has brought more than its share of tensions, frustrations, and concerns, not especially for most of us as individuals, but for the Cantors Assembly as a whole.

We can, if we choose, think of our experiences as obstacles to growth and maturity or we can regard the above mentioned feelings as signs of wholesome development. Last year we celebrated our Bar-Mitzvah. No doubt that the parent of the Bar-Mitzvah assumed that this is a child whom they will have to guide, protect, support and regulate. Certainly a parent who has no confidence in what he has done will not consider his progeny as worthy of respect, love, and affection. We believe, however, that the parent who takes credit for bringing us into the world has done a remarkably good job. So well done that their child is no longer a baby, but a grown son qualified to be regarded as a legitimate partner in sharing the responsibilities and rewards of maintaining our collective home-the Conservative movement in Judaism. The Cantors Assembly recognizes the natural parental weakness on the part of the United Synagogue, preventing their seeing us in our proper stature. Few parents are ready to admit that their children are grown up. But we serve notice that we are grown up and we shall move on from strength to strength arriving at a position of equality in the Conservative Movement with the other great partners and builders in that movement. We look forward to the time when yesterday's children shall actually be encouraged to assume greater responsibility and commensurate equality.

We shall not feel sorry for ourselves, nor shall we desist from our purpose of assuming equality of status and responsibility.

The "humility" of the hazzan will be left for the pulpit when he stands before his God as *shliyah txbur* before our partners in the Conservative Movement we shall stand with hand-outstretched in friendship as equals. A humble Cantors Assembly will produce poor hazzanim for the justifiably proud puplits of the United Synagogue of America. We shall be patient and we shall wait-even for six months or if necessary for four years. They still say in some circles *sh'monah*

esray lihupah, at 18 years we shall stand as equals with the Rabbinical Assembly, United Synagogue, Jewish Theological Seminary of America under the *huppah* of the Conservative Movement.

May I suggest that every future administration of the Cantors Assembly will certainly employ every legitimate and fair means fathering equality but-may I humbly suggest that this is not the first order of business.

The Cantors Assembly and the individual hazzan are indispensable to the well being and continued expansion of the Conservative Movement.

Prayer and all that it means to Judaism and the Jewish people is even of greater importance today than in the ages of faith of the past. Separated from God by so many forces and barriers, the Jew needs desperately the blessing of the *kol d'mama daka* of the still small voice of our faith.

It has been said that to warm up a congregation one needs to build a fire on the bimah. We need men who are enflamed with a love of God and who are willing to offer themselves and their vanities on the altar of service. I have said it in the past and I shall repeat it. The American Synagogue needs on its bimah men who will think of God and what he wants of them rather than think of themselves and what they want of Him. Such hazzanim, filled with sincerity and committed in humility to fulfill his *mitzvot* will not worry about their ability to affect changes in Heaven-for surely their own warmth, devotion and dedication make them effective servants of God and teachers of His people.

The role of the hazzan has changed in the last 15 years and more of his work is to be found in the teaching of music: prayers and nusach. Our people will be better equipped to feel at home in the synagogue as they will learn and understand what they must do in it. Let no chance to teach be by-passed. Many a heart congealed by grief or anxiety has responded to the voice of music in the synagogue and many a Jew has renewed his strength as he has been able to lean on the familiar melodies of his peoples faith speaking down through the corridors of the centuries reminding him that "the Lord is with me I shall not fear."

For this new era we must produce songs that sing the glory of God, of hope for man and faith in both. We must create music which brings the great Biblical themes to modern ears. Let us fear God and build and inspire man. This means to create music that will challenge new poets to write triumphant words. We have a new frontier of a world being born anew. Man is facing up to his relations and his relationships and these can be painful times, but also glorious times.

There are the great themes of Israel reborn, of awakening Jewish communities in lands which were somnolent under colonial masters for centuries, of men struggling to unleash the power in the atom and of the deeper struggle going on in the human conscience to determine whether that unleashed power will be *livrakhah or liklalah* for a blessing or a curse.

These are great times and we are privileged to be alive. Let our successors say of us that we did not diminish the light, but rather added to it.

I would recommend increased efforts to establish a journal or publication dedicated to hazzanuth hymnology, choirs, choral groups, etc. which would be mailed to the thousands of Jews in our movement to whom our work is important.

It is time that we joined our colleagues in the Rabbinical Assembly in raising the standards, inner organizational discipline, and dignity. A re-evaluation of pulpit seeking and pulpit filling ought to receive added attention.

We should begin to expand the training program for more cantors and think of filling pulpits in other countries where Jewish communities are desperately in need of our spiritual ministrations.

I look for a moment into the future and I dare not predict what will be. Yet this I know. The future will be good if men today build for tomorrow. I know that there are great opportunities for our movement to contribute to a healthy and peaceful society, or to strengthen our nation to face danger if need be. I know too that in time we shall be a recognizable and contributing equal member in our movement. Your efforts and mine shall make it so.

May I thank God for having allowed me the privilege of serving you as president. May I thank you with a humble heart for the great honor you bestowed upon me. I pray that I shall never forget the lessons I have learned. Be assured that as I leave the chair of the president it is simply to occupy the chair of an interested and devoted member of the ever growing Cantors Assembly of tomorrow.

A CONCERT OF MUSIC FOR THE SYNAGOGUE FOR OUR TIME

World Premiere Performance of New Works
Commissioned by the Fund for Publications of
the Cantors Assembly of America

**Tuesday Evening April Eighteenth, 1961
at 10 o'clock**

GROSSINGER'S
Liberty, New York

The Cantors Assembly of America is proud to present the world-premiere performance of a number of new liturgical compositions for Hazzan, Chorus and Organ commissioned by the Assembly through the "Fund for Publications of the Cantors Assembly of America."

With this series of commissions, to be repeated annually, the Cantors Assembly of America becomes the first body of hazzanim in history to translate into reality the goal of all hazzanim: the assurance of the continuity of Jewish musical tradition. It is our hope that this series will enhance that tradition and will help usher in a new era of musical creativity in the American Synagogue.

The composers whose works are to be presented this evening are all distinguished musicians who devote the major part of their labor and time to the synagogue, and who are at home in its *nusah* and tradition. We are proud to be joined with them.

So that the results of this evening's concert will have immediate and far reaching consequence the entire series of commissioned works has been published by Mills Music, Inc., as a joint venture between the Cantors Assembly, publisher and composer.

May the sounds of these works be heard soon and again in synagogues across the land, and even, around the world.

The participating hazzanim, colleagues of the Cantors Assembly of America, will be assisted by the Synagogue Chorus, under the direction of Mr. Lazar Weiner, Rochelle Rothpearl, accompanist.

PROGRAM

Blessed Is The Man (Psalm 1) *	I. Freed
*Presented as a Memorial to the Composer.	
Please refrain from applauding.	
Adonoy Z'choronu	M. Janowski
HAZZAN ISAAC GOODFRIEND, Soloist	
Community Temple, Cleveland, Ohio	
Seu Sheorim	R. Kosakoff
HAZZAN ARTHUR KORET, Soloist	
Emanuel Synagogue, Hartford, Conn.	
Halbein Chatoeinu (Recitative)	M. Wohlbsrg
HAZZAN BEN BELFER	
B'nai Sholom, Rockville Center, N. Y.	
Ki Onu Amecho	H. Fromm
(For We Are Thy People)	
HAZZAN PHILIP BLACKMAN, Soloist	
Beth El Synagogue, Philadelphia, Pa.	
Shomeyr Yisrohil	C. Davidson
HAZZAN DAVID OSEN, Soloist	
Teaneck Jewish Center, Teaneck, N. J.	
Uvashofor Godol	A. W. Binder
HAZZAN ISAAC GOODFRIEND, Soloist	
Ovinu Malkeinu	A. Salkov
HAZZAN SAMUEL DUBROW, Soloist	
Beth El, Cedarhurst, N. Y.	
Kiddush for Rosh Hashanah	A. Ellstein
HAZZAN DAVID OSEN, Soloist	
Memorial Service For The Departed	
	M. Castelnuovo-Tedesco
a. Adonay Mah Adam b. Mah Enosh	
C. Yoshev B'seter d. Shiviti	
HAZZAN PHILIP BLACKMAN, Soloist	
Hayom Tamtzenu	M. Silver
HAZZAN ARTHUR KORET, Soloist	
Or Zarua Latsadik	S. Landau
,HAZZAN SAMUEL DUBROW, Soloist	
The Litany of Solomon Ben Aaron	H. Berlinski
HAZZAN ABRAHAM DENBURG, Soloist	
Beth El Congregation, Akron, Ohio	
From the Kol Nidre Service	G. Ephros
V'nislach	S'Lach Noh
Vayomer	Shehecheyonu
Adonoy	
HAZZAN SAMUEL DUBROW, Soloist	
Yaaleh	L. Weiner
HAZZAN ARTHUR KORET, Soloist	
Halleluyoh	S. Secunda
HAZZAN BEN BELFER, Soloist	
The Synagogue Chorus was especially organized and prepared for this Concert by	
MR. LAZAR WEINER, Conductor	

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 19, 1961

**MORNING SESSION
PANEL DISCUSSION**

**"HOW SHALL WE PRAY TODAY"
MAKING THE SERVICE OF WORSHIP
MEANINGFUL FOR OUR TIME**

Chairman:

HAZZAN BENJAMIN SIEGEL
Temple Israel
Great Neck, New York

Liturgy:

RABBI HERMAN KIEVAL
Temple Israel
Albany, New York

Music:

HAZZAN NATHAN MENDELSON
Shaar Hashamayim
Montreal, Canada

The Worshipper:

MR. JOEL SCHENKER
Temple Beth El
Cedarhurst, New York

Hazzan Siegel:

The most important session of our convention, I feel, is entitled, "*How Shall We Pray Today?*" The object of the session is to bring together the representative of those people most interested in the service and in prayer—the rabbi, the cantor and the worshipper. We have posed to these representatives the proposition that changes in service are not necessarily bad, that our history, and our ritual is a continuous record of change after change. We will ask these people what changes they think are necessary and how these changes should be made. Rabbi Herman Kieval of Albany will speak on the subject from the point of view of liturgy. Our colleague, Nathan Mendelson, will speak from the point of view of music for the service and Mr. Joel Schenker, a prominent layman, will speak from the point of view of the worshipper.

We will start the session with the layman, Mr. Joel Schenker, a prominent figure in the real estate industry, a leading theatrical producer, a devoted worker on behalf of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, associate chairman of the National Planning Committee of the Seminary and also a member of the Seminary's Board of Overseers, a member of the Board of Directors and a co-founder of the Seminary's Universal Brotherhood movement. He is personally active in synagogue life. Mr. Schenker served for many years as president of Temple Beth El in Cedarhurst, L. I. He is active in many other areas of Jewish community life. He is Vice President of the Grand Central Hospital, formerly Beth David of N.Y.C., and also a member of the board of the American Thespian Society. Mr.

Schenker is also active in the theatrical world—a member of the Board of Directors of the American Theater Wing, a member of the Board of Directors and Vice President and Executive Producer of the American Shakespeare Festival Society, Stratford, Conn. Currently co-producing several major productions with the Theatre Guild, Mr. Schenker's new hit is a "Far Country." I give you Mr. Joel Schenker.

Mr. Schenker:

Friends, rabbis, cantors and their wives. I am as much surprised to be here as I am to be called upon to speak first. I would have thought that all of the rules of protocol would have demanded that the rabbi speak first then the cantor, and then the poor layman. Certainly, it would have given me an opportunity to refresh things in my own memory and help me in the few things that I should like to say in the 15 minutes that have been allotted to me. I wonder when you invited me just what it was you actually expected to hear from a worshipper, a so called worshipper. It must be evident to you that I am no authority on *halacha*; I am not a trained student in Hebrew. As a matter of fact, I stumble along as I read my prayers and I wondered just what the Hazzan had to do with the reformation of the prayer service. I myself feel that I am only qualified to discuss things which I choose to call the esthetics of prayer rather than prayer itself for I think that prayer itself is a completely lost art in our American Jewish world and in our American synagogues. Surely, I have seen very little evidence of it.

The Hazzan shares with the rabbi, I think, in determining what the prayer book should contain. By and large, it would seem to me that the cantor's position, while a central one, is really the man who establishes the climate of opinion for the prayer service. In his hands are the instruments for raising the level of the service. In his hands, I think, rests the hope that perhaps some day, we will eliminate altogether from our synagogues the drab standard of garbling that passes for synagogue music. And I think that to that end that cantors should never stop training themselves, not merely in the content of the service, but in new music itself. The function of the cantor vis-a-vis the reformation of the prayer service is, I am afraid, in American Jewish life a secondary position.

I should like to say at the outset, however, that I think it is the cantor who can take what presently passes for prayer service and which to many American Jews is a meaningless service, and make of that service a model, beautifully inspiring one. I think it is the cantor who can do it. This requires constant writing and re-writing of music. It requires dedication and above all it requires rabbis and laymen who understand what the cantor is trying to do so that he might be permitted to do. In any case, to the subject that the chairman posed as he introduced me, namely, that we believe in a continuous and never-ending change of service, I wish to add a hearty "Amen."

I know a little about audiences. I know something of the responses of people and the reactions of people to spoken words and to music. I have served a severe apprenticeship in this area. Sometimes I have succeeded. More often I have failed. I speak therefore, I think, as a bit of an expert and by and large it is a miracle to me that the average service that we now hear in most of the synagogues in America is able to hold even the few worshippers that remain, who come there for the purpose of worshipping rather for the purpose of being seen or to attend a social function. You expect to hear from a layman the truth as he sees it and the truth as I see it in a synagogue that is a vital one, in an area that is almost wholly Jewish, is not an optimistic one.. Far from it. For I believe that we have made one very grave mistake. We have abdicated, it seems to me, our synagogue and our synagogue service to a monster that has grown up in American Jewish life. Unfortunately this monster appears to us in the guise of a very lovable child, sometimes quite close to us but nevertheless, we have abdicated almost everything that was meaningful and instructive in the service on the Sabbath for the purpose of catering to a rite, an American rite of Bar Mitzvah which I think has no roots in our tradition at all.

Speaking for myself as a person who believes that the synagogue should be the most important center of all Jewish life, and as a person who enjoys going to the synagogue, if this continues it will only succeed in driving away the few people who reflect my point of view.

We have taken the Torah service, which is the only communicating link that the average Jew has between the traditions of Judaism and himself, and we have aborted that service into a pageant, and not a well-written one; into a play which wouldn't run one night anywhere else, and have made it a meaningless piece of gibberish for young Michael, David or Bruce or Thomas, or whatever his name is, who stands up there with his tallis and little black tie and he sings in a chant that he learned from a record, in a melody that isn't very pleasing to the modern ear, and he recites words that probably he doesn't understand or if he does, he understands it-better than the audience. Then there is the struggle that has gone on prior to his being called up to read his Maftir, after the distribution of the aliyah; and the whole business of coming to the Bar Mitzvah and arising at hours that no other member of any other place would dare presume upon, has so completely distracted the average Sabbath prayer service, for me at any rate, as an individual, that it requires an enormous amount of patience and fortitude to attend synagogue today.

The grave mistake, it seems to me, that we have made has been this over-emphasis on the child. **I have** 4 daughters of my own so I am not anti-child, but we have made this mistake in the theater as well, if you please. For many modern American plays, their dramatists choose to believe that nobody over the age

of 30 has a problem. All plays are about people under 30. This was entirely untrue about theaters 76 years ago.

In Jewish life nobody over 13 means anything worthwhile bothering with. What we have forgotten are the men and women of my age and my generation who eagerly sought some Jewish instruction, who did not have the Yeshiva backgrounds that most of you had and who came to the synagogue out of a hunger, a yearning to learn and who found themselves utterly ignored between the Bar and the Bas Mitzvah, between God being made chairman of the UJA committee and between the federation drives and all of the other secular activities that have descended upon the synagogue. Men like myself, I feel, have found little or no place in the synagogue and within the confines of Jewish life, at least to seek those things which brought them there in the first place. The emphasis has been upon the child and our prayer and our prayer service has either literally been forgotten or there is literally no time for it. It seems to me, as a prophet of doom, Judaism has become to most Jews in America identified with going to synagogue at least for an hour or two on the Holy Days, eating matzohs on Passover and attending a Bar Mitzvah, or a wedding. Unless, the learned leaders of American Jewish life, (and I realize I am talking to Conservative Jews, the problem is even greater) unless we find the answer to this problem, I fear that the 21st and 22nd centuries will be able to give to those who come after us the consolation, whatever consolation religion has to give, will be given by the major or majority faiths of this country.

We need more emphasis on Judaism, on teaching, less emphasis on God, for by now the images of God, I think, either vary from the Man with the beard to the Man who resembles Norman Vincent Peale. I myself, feel very deeply about these stone mausoleums we are erecting all over the country-these social pressures which are driving people into these places and who come there for a few days a year. The boards of trustees who confine their activities solely to the men's clubs, gin-rummies, Sisterhoods and the theater parties.

I should like to cite a case in point. A colleague of mine, Mr. Kenneth Bloomgarden, last year produced a play called "The Wall." His books are open for inspection to any Jewish group for the play closed. He was unable to sell a single benefit to a Hadassah, a Sisterhood, or a Mens Club. They were buying "Under the Yum Yum Tree", and "Bye, Bye Birdie" and "Do Rei Me" and "The Wall" languished. There has grown up in the area of the theater a maxim that if you do a play that presents a serious Jewish problem, the goyim won't come and the Jews will only want passes. My friends, there is much work to be done by the hazzan and by the rabbi in the American synagogue if the American Jew of the 21st century, the Jew of tomorrow, is to be taught to understand the traditions, the ethics of his fathers and his father. For the beauty of our legendry, the story of our people, the wisdom

and the learning of our rabbis are not being imparted in the Sunday schools designed by Frank Lloyd Wright and in the educational curricula designed by John Dewey. There is much to be done in the synagogue. By and large the rabbinate and the hazzan have succeeded in bringing in great numbers to the synagogue, large numbers of people in recent years who have affiliated for one reason or another. Perhaps it was Hitler, perhaps it was the social pressures of the suburbs. I know, speaking for the Seminary unofficially, and I have been identified with raising funds for the Seminary for 15 years, we raise practically nothing in cities like New York. Our big funds come from the suburbs and so for one reason or another these people have come. It does not necessarily mean, and I am sure it does not, rekindling of interest in Jewish learning, in Judaism itself. It is a variety of things completely unrelated to those factors. To the hazzan who was bold enough to invite me and as a layman who was presumptuous enough to speak to you for a few minutes on this subject, may I say to you that the few friends like myself you have always had, but by and large the great number of thinking, modern, young American intellectuals find nothing of interest in our synagogues, in our prayer service and in prayer itself. For prayer is something that the American Jew *knows* very little about; he has very little to pray for if you give him the poetry of the present Siddur. The image of God that he creates in his own mind is something that I cannot understand and I doubt if you can. To the rational, thinking intellectual, to give him supernatural language and to attempt to cause him to believe in a supernatural God is an unnatural thing and in the end must fail, and as one who dearly wishes the link that ties me to my father's father to be extended to generations to come, I am concerned about the problem as a simple ordinary congregant and to you, the professionals, the hazzan, the rabbis, I leave the solution of the problem.

Hazzan Siegel :

Thank you for a very provocative talk. Although some of us may have questions to ask later on, it is still good to hear, to use your own words, the point of view of the "poor layman". Let me give the order of this morning's session. Each speaker will take about 15 minutes, and you have done just that. After that we will ask the speakers to examine each other and then we will accept questions from the floor.

Our second speaker this morning is a colleague, a man respected and revered by all of us and quite modest, as all three of these gentlemen are. It was like pulling teeth to get any information about them but I understand he was born in Glasgow, Scotland. I think he told me this because if any of you are puzzled with the accent he has that is the reason for it. He attended Yeshiva Yitzchak Elchanan, a graduate of City College, where he received a Bachelor of Science Degree and of New Jersey Law School where he received a Law Degree; presently he is serving as cantor in Shaar Hashamayim in Montreal. He has

been there for the past 23 years. Past-president of the Montreal National Fund Council and of the Montreal Jewish Music Council; a vice president of the Montreal Cantors Council; also our own beloved past-president. I present to you our next speaker, Hazzan Nathan Mendelson.

Hazzan Mendelson :

Thank you Mr. Chairman. I should like to pay tribute to the Cantors Assembly as host on this occasion. My compliments go to my colleagues of this convention, for the manner in which the entire set-up has been arranged and for something that perhaps my colleagues don't have to be complimented for, (I should take it as a matter of course during the years we have acquired a feeling of waiting, seeing, what is involved before passing judgment.) The arrangements for this convention by the individuals responsible have been a thrill to me. I should like to pay respects to the guests at this head table, who are your guests and mine as well at this moment, I know in our shule, preparations are very, very strong for tonight's Seminary dinner which I shall unfortunately miss for the first time and I particularly regret because tonight I understand the topic will be launched to establish a chair at the Seminary in the name of my late associate, Harav Dr. Abromowitch who was for 45 years the personal leader of our congregation and with whom I had the good fortune to spend ten years, almost ten years at the pulpit. I should like to mention my Canadian Colleagues who are here in some force, who are gradually growing in number and I may have to depend upon them occasionally (I'm not running for office).

I should like to greet my family, my wife is here, my mother, *zol zein gezundt*, and I have 2 relatives who are colleagues. Of course, I couldn't possibly overlook my father-in-law, he is too big to be over-looked. Rev. Chazan *zol xein gexunudt* is here with Mrs. Chazan and is beginning to ask some questions. And that brings me into my subject.

My own thinking, even if it is bad, mind you, but especially if it is any good, is inspired by the direct work of the Almighty, a supernatural God, I therefore feel that I can launch into what I have to say about Tefillah through a remark made by my father-in-law about a *p'shat* in the Haggadah. I would like to bring a little *geulah* because we know that "*Hamevi davar beshem omro mevi geula laoam*."

My father in law asks the question "Why does the Hagadah dwell on *afilu kulanu chachamim*, kulanu nevonnim, . . ." It was to emphasize the *kulanu*. The *chachamim* said, "Even if we who are sitting at this seder table now are all wise, nevertheless it is our duty to tell again the story of the exodus from Egypt. The Hagadah bears this out. Obviously their pupils were not present at the time because the Hagadah recounts that they kept on telling of the story of Egypt--*ad shebau talmidehem*, until their pupils arrived to remind them that it was time for the morning service. This retelling of the story of the Exodus

was, therefore, not a children's story. They were teaching each other the meaning of the Haggadah. This is how I would apply this **p'shat** to our present problem. We need this discussion even though we are all wise, all skilled in prayer, and all of us here know a good deal about the subject of this discussion. My remarks are directed not to the novices, or the children or the illiterate among us but to all of us who are concerned enough to be here now.

A very dear colleague of mine, old and learned, always used to start any discussion on the art of hazzanut by insisting that that Maharil established the synagogue nushao t. Now it is well known that the Maharil was a great scholar and a contributor to the **Shulchan Aruch** but it is not so well known that the Maharil was also a great hazzan, a great baal **tefillah**. I am sure you have read what Prof. Idelson said about the Maharil. Among other things, Prof. Idelson says that the Maharil was chiefly responsible for saving the ritual of the German synagogues when German tradition began to decay. Surely the words of Prof. Idelsohn must be taken seriously. My old friend would say with reference to the question of the **nushao t**, "I can't confine myself. I cannot take a recitative, even if I have written it myself, and sing it in the synagogue just as I have noted it down. I have in my pocket recitatives from all the great masters I take a theme from them and then go off on my own."

He, in a sense, was going through the liberation from Egypt every time he went to the **Amud**, because he was escaping, he was liberating himself from the bonds and the bounds of the written word and the written note.

A member of my congregation asked me a question about prayer which has set me to thinking recently: "I have a number of close friends of different faiths, occasionally they pray by making up their own prayers about whatever is troubling them and they feel this satisfies their needs. Don't we have such a freedom? Isn't that freedom derived from us some where?"

I told the questioner: "Of course, it is derived from us." "But what happened?" she continued, "why don't I and my friends pray in this fashion any more?"

I tried to give her an answer **al regel achat**.

First, certainly we have this freedom. "It was a gift of God given through the Jewish people to the Universe. Our sages taught, whenever we have a fitting personal prayer it may be inserted into the Amidah at the proper point. The **Amidah** contains so many subjects that surely one can find a place where it will be appropriate. If you can't do that put it in before the concluding "**Yihiyi L'ratxon imre fi**' If you can devise a prayer to fit your mood, please do so."

But the sages coined a **matbeah shel tefila**. The work done on these coins of prayer turned them into currency, the medium of exchange for prayer. All over the world these coins were established as the foundation of prayer by people who worked at prayer.

These **matbeot**, therefore, have a value. And they have remained bright through all the ages and places of our dispersion. They acted as a medium of exchange for the sacred thought of Jewish human beings. If we cannot devise our own prayers let us investigate the work of the **Anshe Keneset Hag'dolah**, the work of the Gaonim, the teachers of prayer throughout the ages. Let us rely not only on ourselves, not only on our own period but upon the **matbeah shel tefila** of all ages, the currency of prayer which our ancestors knew and which they brought to the highest pitch of perfection. Surely you can find there something that can move you. Besides these there are always the Psalms. There you can certainly find something appropriate for almost any occasion."

That was my answer to a lay person's question at that particular time but what is my answer to you?

In **Mishna Shabbat** we have the instruction that the hazzan should be **observant of where the children are reading**. This refers to **nerot shabbat** giving instruction as to how one may use the lights of the **Shabbat** to further the study of children.

Let us apply it in our congregations. We have all sorts of situations in our synagogues. The ideal situation would be if the congregants were all pious and scholarly, everyone would come, sit down for an hour, pray for an hour, wait around for an hour of study, three times a day. As the **Gemarah** says, if they spend nine hours a day in this fashion, how will they sustain themselves? The answer is that if they are so conversant with God's ways He will care for them. That would be the ideal situation. We don't have such congregations. But because we don't have such congregations it is the duty of the hazzan to give attention to **where the children are reading**. In our congregations there is a mixture of all ranges of piety and knowledge, all sorts of motivation. Let us see what the level of our congregations is and gradually make the effort to raise it.

I would suppose, therefore, that the need is for the hazzan to become aware of the individual needs of the individual worshipper and to assist him in meeting those needs. Does the answer lie, perhaps, in more attractive forms of presentation? Can we learn from the world of theater? The world of the theater contains a multitude of men whose genius expresses itself in forms of presentation and in analyzing contents for the amount that the presentation will take in order for it to be conveyed rather than lost. We must pay attention to that. Where it is placed and what is the function of music in the service?

There is planned music in the service and there is spontaneous music in the service. The planned music expresses itself in solo worship, in choir, in concert works. And if the man in charge says, "Gentlemen, I want something you can't give me, you'll never succeed," Remember that challenge! "You'll never succeed, you'll never give me what I want, I'm going to demand it from you, so try." You may not get there but you'll get closer. If that is the attitude then surely the planned music must go from stage to stage. Be-

sides that, there is the other side. I can't tell you much about planned music. You know more than I do. You deal with it more. Fortunately or unfortunately my synagogue doesn't have any organ accompaniment or instrumental accompaniment. We have an orthodox tradition in this conservative synagogue and Canada generally represents such a picture. There has been a development along different lines. The orthodox, the traditional has remained within the world of Conservative Jews in Canada and the term Conservatism there means what it says, we are Conservative. I am not now speaking of a name. I am speaking of the factual meaning of the word conservative, as usually taken but don't connect it with the Conservative Movement.

We are a part of the Conservative Movement and we are joined in the effort which is continent wide and which is now spreading to other continents. But as I said, fortunately or unfortunately, (I think we are fortunate) we don't have these problems to the same degree of presentation because we are limited in our material. We have a male choir of ten men. (We used to have boys together with the men.) It was an angelic choir but the boys are gone. The work was evidently tremendous. We felt we were defeating our own purpose. I protested. I didn't know how to work it out. We have now a ten men choir. The choir master is present at this convention, Prof. Jacob Rosemarin. He has been with us a number of years now, introducing beautiful material into the synagogue.

You have greater problems, those of you who deal with the larger picture of introducing more material in presentation. The words of the panelist who preceded me are very much appropos to those materials. I am sure there is a great deal to learn. The world is esthetic in its finest points. The originators of our prayers, the pioneers of the synagogue, those who were responsible before the music was written down were subject to a *ruach haElohim merachelef*, the spirit of the Lord hovered over the face of the deep and the spontaneous expression was that of the *Baal Tefilah*. But where shall we go to find the *Baal Tefilah*? Has he departed forever? The rabbi used to be a *Baal Tefilah* very often. Some couldn't They were sorry. Where possible the Rav used to daven *Neilah*. My father, olav *hashalom*, used to daven *Neilah*. He still did if the Hazzan wasn't well.

. . (Here followed some personal reminiscences and musical illustrations.)

There was a living nusach. There are of course limitations of all kinds. I leave the aspect of the technique of presentation for the moment to return to the subject of prayer. I want to give you a very brief thought of the *nushaot* as conflict and revolution. There is a lot you can teach me about the mode of presentation and concert work. Those who did not attend the beautifully conducted service this morning missed something even more beautiful than the concert of last evening. This morning's service was an *aliyat n'shamah*.

It was not only an *aliyat n'shamah*, it showed that it was possible for the chaotic form of these *nushaot* that we have, to resolve themselves in definite expressions which is being written down in part by our colleague Hazzan Spiro. I was so confused, I think, with the week day service and the *nushaot* that when I got into the elevator with him I talked upside down. He'll know what I mean. The *nushaot* have been given names. You have two names for each of three *nushaot* and one name for the fourth. If I am wrong please correct me.

I want to know what I am talking about. You have *Magen dvot* or *Yishtabach* on a parallel — one name. Then you have two names, *ddonai Malach* and *Yekum Purkon* on a parallel. It's two names for one nusach; the same nusach, generally speaking. This is also true of the *M'Sheberah* and *dv Harachamin* modes. The fourth is *dhavah Rabba*. It has only one name. What are they talking about? Why did our folk genius find expression in seven names, four *nushaot*? Three have two names each, one has only one name. Naturally, one thinks about such things. Occasionally you come to the conclusion to drop them. For example, you might in three of them think the scale going up and scale going down. Maybe the double names provide some way of indicating that. But how do I know? Perhaps, one represented a scale which went upward most of the time and the other downward. You say *Shochen Ad* both ways (up and down). This, in itself, the fact that *Ahavah Rabah* has only one name is interesting. There is no lack of prayer in the *dhavah Rabah* mode.

In these four *nushaot* I would like to indicate that there was this problem of conflict of resolution. You have, for example, *Adonai malach geut lovesh* The Lord is King of the universe. But let me give a little analogy. I heard this from Dr. Solovechick at a kinus of rabbanim. Take these six little words: *Baruch ata adonai, elohenu melech haolam*. My God, (He is near us), King of the world, (He is far away). Nevertheless in these six words he takes together two extremes, the intimacy of the personal God and the remote *kadosh, kadosh, kadosh*. But we live with that and every child who learns the *bracha* at his mother's knee or from his father lives with this concept and generally gets to know it. Eventually, given time we learn to live with a paradox.

The Ethics of the Fathers mentions "everything is foreseen; free will is given." We live with that paradox.

So here double names were given to indicate the paradox. The Lord reigns in the universe. (Universal God.) *Yekum purkon min shemayah*, He will give us help. Help will arrive from heaven. (Personal intimate God whom you can ask for what you need.)

Yishtabach — there are sixteen praise words in *yishtabach* ending with *brachot v'hodoat* — nothing personal, nothing intimate. *Magen dvot*, cause our people to rest on the Sabbath. You cannot cure the ills of the Sabbath by profaning it in any matter whatsoever. You cannot cure the ills of prayer by profaning

them in any manner whatsoever. You cannot cure the ills of something sacred by profaning it. The third, *Mi Shebarach-Av Harachamim*, we ask for a blessing upon this congregation and upon all holy congregations and — also give us wine for Kiddush and Havdalah. Whereas in the others we are blessed in a polarity from the universal God to the God from whom we ask our *bakashot*, the God of history. In this polarity there is something else. In *Yad Vahem* in Eretz Yisrael it is recorded that in Israel where they have a Yom Hazikaron.

A certain number of people are praying for a yom HaZikaron for more people than live in Israel. *Av Horachamim*, what kind of *Av Horachamim* is it. *Tehilot Lakodosh Al Aileh Shemasru Nafsham Al Kidush Hashem*. Is this a Father of mercy? There is a polarity between this prayer and the *Mi Sheberach*. It is a polarity between this world and the world into which the *Kehilot Hakodesh* have gone. And therefore I think the word is used, *Birachamov Hoatxumim* because there will be need for mighty *rachmim* to make up for the *Kehilot Hakodesh shemasru nafsham al Kidush Hashem*. The sentence *Sh' ma Israel* which follows *Ahava Rabbah* is placed immediately between the word *Habocher B'amo Israel Biahava* (the Lord has chosen Israel in love) and *V'ahavta et Elohecha* (Thou shalt love the Lord thy God). Now here you have the resolution. The resolution is a reconciliation of two apparently mutually exclusive emotions. *Ahavah* and *Yirah liyached et Hashem*. Read the *Ahava Rabbah*. The resolution of *Yirah* and *Ahava* is impossible for human beings to reconcile except in God. Here I quote from *The World of Prayer* translated by Dr. Henry Biberfeld from the work of Dr. Eli Monk I shall not quote him in full but that was the idea and a man who can succeed in reconciling these two, *Ahava* and *Yirah*, the heart of that man will not be affected by revolts, by apathy, by dejection. It accepts complete accord, unconditional submission to the Divine in infinite serene faith will permeate his soul. That is what it means to be perfect with God, to possess tranquility. This fusion of even the most contradictory affection into one perfect unity is the secret of the truly pious. Only in the relationship of man to God is it conceivable. It causes the same person who trembles in abject fear before God to give vent at the same time to the most ardent desire to be near him in *Ahavoh Rahoh*. So I say many of us bow when we say *Barukh ata Hashem* towards the audience. Many of us bow towards the Ark. It is important to recognize that if the Lord to whom we bowed in the past when we bowed towards the Ark cannot help then when we bow to the congregation we surely are beyond help.

Rabbi Herman Kieval :

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman, especially for your kind personal words and testimonial. After we have heard the words of the two prophets Joel and Nathan, I don't know what an ordinary Herman can add. I do want to commend my distinguished and very

thoughtful and able colleagues, my fellow panelists, for stirring up many thoughts in my mind. Many times I was tempted to set aside whatever notes I had prepared in order to take my cue from them. Particularly, I wanted to react to some of the challenging thoughts of Mr. Schenker and I hope to do that in the discussion period which is scheduled to follow.

It is a pleasure to be here with you hazzanim and musical directors and your wives. It was about 10 years ago that you were kind enough to invite me to deliver a lecture to you at your convention and I've been looking forward to the opportunity of coming back and speaking to you again. I don't know why it is that the convention committees select the period of the *Sifrah* for the convention. I suppose it is because we are free of weddings but it plays havoc with the speakers because the committees that plan these symposia are in the mode of *S'firah-S'firas Haomer* except that they spell it with an *aleph* instead of an *ayin*. They cut the words. And of course they expect the speakers to fulfill the now outmoded biblical mitzvah of *K'tzirat Haomer*, also with an *aleph*. Nevertheless I want to add one little bit of Torah since Hazzan Mendelson was expounding the *Haggadah Shel Pesach*, and since we are in the post-Passover season, some wag once said, probably after listening to a long symposium, *Vayered Mitraymah*, and why? *nus alpi hadibur*.

My assignment (and here I begin my official 16 minutes) as I understand and it is to set up the criteria that are implicit in the history of Jewish liturgy for making whatever adjustments in our current mode of worship which might be required to help us pray today. In other words, as I see it, what we are seeking here is to channel whatever changes, additions or subtractions or modifications might be indicated through the classic categories of liturgical integrity rather than to follow the whims and personal predilections of individuals or *ad hoc* committees be they rabbis or of hazzanim. Now, I'm fully in accord with this approach but I'm highly dubious of my abilities and qualifications to help you in this worthy endeavor. Especially do I hesitate because of the severe time limitations and for this reason I have chosen a very modest approach to an extremely complex problem. And here I must in all conscience digress for a moment to comment on this last phrase I have used, the complexity of this problem, before I present my own modest approach to the problem. Indeed, ladies and gentlemen, if I succeed in nothing else today I pray that I succeed at least in this one matter of indicating that the question we face in "How Shall We Pray Today" is highly complex and does not lend itself to quick or simple solutions.

May I be personal for just a moment.

I've served on the Prayer Book Commission of the Rabbinical Assembly. It used to be the Joint Prayer Book Commission of the Rabbinical Assembly and the United Synagogue of America but as you painfully

know well we are now living through an era, I pray a transitory era, when joint commissions of this kind are awfully difficult to sustain. This is a matter, perhaps, Mr. Schenker you might take back to the Seminary's Board of Directors. I've been serving, I say, on the Prayer Book Commission of the Rabbinical Assembly for almost ten years and it took most of those years to complete a relatively simple new edition of the Daily Prayer Book which hopefully will appear at our own convention next week I can tell you, off the record, (though how I can keep anything off the record with a tape recorder going I don't know) that very few members of our Commission are really satisfied with the work that it took us ten years to do. But such dissatisfaction is by no means confined to our own movement. Need I remind you that even the highly glamorized, so-called first authorized translation of the Traditional Prayer Book for Sabbath and Festivals has split the Orthodox Rabbinate into many factions. And on the other extreme the Reform Rabbinate is clamoring for a newly revised edition of its Union Prayer Book. I quote to you for a moment from the "Journal of the Central Conference of American Rabbis," January 1961 issue, from an article by Rabbi David Polish, one of several articles by the way in that issue dealing with pretty much the same issue that concerns us here namely, "How Shall We Pray Today."

Rabbi Polish says what is common knowledge in the Reform movement although the Union Prayer Book was "newly revised in 1940 there seems to be an increasing body of opinion advocating that it should undergo another revision. Since 1895 the Reform Prayer Book has undergone substantive changes three times in sixty-five years." Desirable or not, Rabbi Polish says, this bespeaks a fluidity and even a tentativeness which reflects either the undulant nature of Reform or a restless search for a position yet undiscovered on which to come to rest.

(Rabbi Polish as a very knowledgeable and thoughtful sensitive person is against further revision of the prayerbook, not because it satisfies him as it is, but because he does not know how to go about changing it. He feels there's no point in putting out yet another edition of the Reform Prayer Book until the whole theological position of Reform is revised. As he says, liturgy follows theology, it does not precede it. Now the lessons of these failures and near failures in attempting to solve the deep seated problems of worship for Jews today through revision of worship and through new prayer books only should not be lost on us. Nevertheless, I submit that the organic growth of Jewish liturgy and even the publication of new *Siddurim* and *Machzorim* need hold no mortal dangers for us so long as a decent regard for Jewish liturgical authenticity is preserved. The whole history of the prayer book is one of growth and development as your chairman well said. Within a framework fixed by tradition yet hospitable, always hospitable, to new content a spiritual dialectic, as it were, to form and freedom. To use a felicitous phrase of Prof. Shalom Spiegel : "It

is this currency of prayer which has insured the unity and integrity of Jewish worship in the face of the visititudes of history and geography on the one hand and the hazardous criteria of prevailing fashion on the other." Now it must be clearly understood that the framework was never intended to stifle the continuing expression of Jewish piety. The emphasis was spontaneity as opposed to *kevah*, fixed rigidity. The tradition of *hidush bet'filah*, of innovation in prayer, is one of the basic traditions of Jewish liturgy and I don't have to belabor this point or to cite you many references. I can refer you immediately to familiar passages in the *Pirke Avot*; Rabbi Shimon, in speaking of how careful we should be in the recitation of the Sh'ma, (and when we recite the Amidah) al taas t'fillat 'kha keva, "Never allow your prayer to become fixed in a rigid text." The Talmud both in the *Yerushalmi* and *Bavli* stress, *tzarikh adam lihadesh davar b't'fillah b'khol yom*. The so-called *matbeah shel t'fillah* originally was simply an opening phrase and a closing phrase and in between the worshipper was free to supply just that personal need for prayer. There are many examples of *Hidush* in the history of the development of the *Siddur* and *Machzor* but it would take much too long to do this justice. My modest approach today was simply to describe to you one area about which I would like to refresh your memory which is perhaps the most revolutionary example of change in the organic growth in the history of Jewish liturgy. I now refer to the enormous liturgical treasure-house known as *Piyut*. I choose this magnificent example of freedom within form, of *Hidush* within the *keva* for many reasons, and not the least of which is that the whole institution of hazzanut, of the Hazzan, is inexorably bound up in the *Piyut* and its role in prayer.

By the year 550 of the Common Era the basic structure of the Jewish prayer book was well established. With some sections already a thousand years old, notably *the Birkhot ha-Sh'ma* and the *Amidah*, and these statutory prayers were already attributed to the men of the great synagogues, these anonymous sages of the Persian Era roughly 500 to 150 B.C.E. These formulas of prayer had been designed as the standard pattern of worship legally binding on all Israel. And this is my point.

It might have been expected that the text of the *Siddur* as it existed in the 6th Century would become as fixed as the text of the Bible and later the *Mishnah* and still later the *Gemarah* were fixed. There was a real danger that the well-springs of Hebrew prayer would be stopped up, especially in view of the deterioration of the Jewish political and economic situation in Palestine at that time. And that this did not come to pass may be attributed to the rise of synagogue poetry, the *Piyut*. At about the 5th Century of the Common Era, and certainly earlier according to some scholars, a fresh channel of liturgical expression was opened by and for a people that was still richly endowed with creative religious genius. Shortly after the compilation of the Palestinian Talmud, at the end of the 4th Century, we note that the relatively simple

worship of the earlier rabbinic age began to take on more stately poetic embellishment and the hazzan played the key role in this. The *Sheliah Tzibbur*, the leader of the worship, who played a much more decisive and creative role before the printed prayer books came into existence. (You see whenever you print something you automatically stamp it as *keva* and that's what is wrong with putting out prayerbooks.)

The hazzan, while reciting the standard prayers from memory, would interpolate newly composed sacred poems of his own composition or those of other hazzan-poets. Into the benedictions of the *Sh'ma* and the *Amidah* were already being inserted by the 12th Century if we are to judge from such sources as the *Machzor Vitry*, supplementary and appropriate prayers at the will of the hazzan. These prayers were printed much as they are in our modern prayerbooks in a special section at the back of the book.

What is the significance of this revolutionary development for our own liturgical problems? It means that instead of thinking only in terms of deletion when we talk of revising our worship services we must think in terms of expansion and enrichment. The *payetanim*, you see, did more than create a new form of Hebrew literature. They also established a precedent for worthy addition to the ritual by the Hazzan. Their example might also arouse our own generation to the continuing need for creative liturgical expression as a reflection of recent Jewish experience and thought.

I would like to give you some examples of what I mean by the kind of work that is today being done by Yiddish poets, by Hebrew poets both in Israel and other lands, which lend themselves directly to adaptation into our liturgy.

The *payetanim* of ancient Palestine interpreted in sacred music the intricacies of *Halakaha* and *Agadah* much of which was brand new at the time to their congregations. The sweet singers of the medieval Spanish synagogues added new philosophic dimensions to the popular God-faith of their time. The Ashkenazic saints and sages like the Maharshal intoned God's praises and lamented Israel's tragedy through the dark centuries. In our own day perhaps the poets of Israel's supreme martyrdom and miraculous rebirth shall voice to their contemporaries, to us, gathered in our far-flung sanctuaries, fresh insight into the faith and destiny of the Jew and of every man.

Hazzan Siegel-It seems to me that what I got from the discussion up here is that while change is good we should be concerned mainly with the reasons for change. Is it to satisfy the *Baaley-Simcha* of the Bar and Bat Mitzvah service or is it to make our own services more palatable and meaningful for our congregations. A very distinguished lay speaker, Mr. Joel Schenker stresses the ills within the services today and offers a very pessimistic point of view.

Questions from the Floor

Hazzan Weisgal--I would like to ask Rabbi Kieval to define more clearly what he means actually by *Hidush* and *Keva*.

Rabbi Kieval-The answer is relatively simple. The intention of the sources that I quoted, and there are many others that I did not quote, is not to the music but refers to the actual words. There was only a relative kind of rigidity to the *Matbeah Shel Tfillah* and in this regard I want to interpret correctly passages dealing with changing the words of the prayers which is almost always misunderstood. There is a well known statement by Rabbi Yosi: "*KoI Ham'shaneh mimatbeah Shel Tfillah She-tavu chahamim*-that it is a terrible thing to change the mode or formula of prayer which our sages formulated with regard to the *Brakhot*. This statement however refers only to the *Birkot Hanehenim*. This is *Halakha*. Those *Brakhot* were so brief that the entire text was fixed, but I venture to say that nowhere in the entire Talmud, and that's covering a lot of ground, will you find a complete prayer except for the private prayers which precede the daily morning service. Those you will find complete. The private prayers which were encouraged, and there were thousands of them, only a few of which have come down to us but the communal prayers are not spelled out for us in the Talmud. You get only "*Modim*" or the prayer will be named "*Avot*". You never see the full text of *Avot* not in the Rabbinic literature. So that they had fluidity, they had freedom to interpolate. To this day if you look in the *Siddur*-you look in the prayer of *Slach Nah*. You will find "- here you may insert *Selihah*." In the prayer "*Refa-enu*" you may insert your own private prayer for health. This was the custom for every *Brakha* not just for the one. And that's why the great poet-Cantors, the hazzanim, (by the way one of the oldest terms for *Piyutis hazzanut*), seized on this tradition of keeping the prayer mode fluid to keep it alive. That's how we got such things as *Zochrenu Lachayim*. Don't you realize that this is an interruption right in the midst of the first three benedictions of the *Amidah* which, according to the *Halakha*, must not be interrupted especially for personal petitions? Yet these petitions are put in. For hundreds and hundreds of years the rabbis fought it. They would not sanction the insertion of these additional phrases and yet look how beloved they have become. The will of the people is what saved those interpretations which were considered improper according to the legal authority. The will of the people played a powerful role.

As far as the rigidity of the music of the service is concerned I hope that when some of the great poets like Bialik, Rimon, Shimoni and the late Yakov Cohen (who just passed away) when their spiritual longing someday becomes part of the prayer books and *Machzorim* so we don't *daven* the same thing each day of the *Yom Tov* (On *Pesach* at least, thank God, we have still a few pages of *Brakh Dodi* and the like which the Prayer Book Commission let remain in the prayer book, the Passover service at least does not sound like every other service)-when we similarly add some of the works of these other great poets perhaps some of you composers will write beautiful music for them.

Hazzan Saul Meisels : I want to ask a question of

the speaker that perhaps will lead our discussion a little bit closer to home and to the needs that we face every day in the synagogue not so much with *Halakha* and the interpretation of the laws-we know that we must live by it and that we need it and it is precious to us. But when we look out into the congregation on Sabbath morning to empty seats, our question is, "How shall we pray so that we hold the interest of our people?" Can we still permit a Yom Kippur musaf to last for six hours when our congregation is constantly walking in and out? People spend only one hour out of the six at the service-you see them coming back only at Neilah time. I think we ought to discuss this from the point of view of the rabbi, from the point of view of the hazzan and from the point of view of the man in the pew.

Mr. Shenker-It has been for me a great experience to sit on this platform. Much of what I have heard in the last hour bears as much relationship it seems to me to the problems of the American Jew as the words of Cantor Mendelson bears to the children who are now swimming in the Grossinger pool outside this room. I don't wish to be rude. I don't think we are talking about the same things at all-not at all. I think that this language that I have listened to, much of which I did not understand, bears little relationship and communicates very little to the great bulk of the American Jewish community. The average Jew has no relation to, does not understand, nor is he in the least affected by what I have heard here this morning from two undoubtedly great scholars, Hazzan Mendelson and Rabbi Kieval. I again say I do not wish to be disrespectful. This language for a small hearty band of intellectual aficionados is undoubtedly of the greatest importance. That's what our seminaries are for. It is with all of this that you gird your loins in order to impart this tradition and these great ingredients of Judaism to the congregations all over the country, but if this is so, then you have completely failed. For there are no great congregations except in membership rolls and I again earnestly submit to you that I don't think Jews come to the synagogue to pray in America. I am sure in my grandfather's or great-grandfather's times they had a great deal to pray about on the Sabbath; their life was a harsh and a hard one. I come from a community which if you will forgive the vulgarity is a Golden Ghetto. It probably has a per capita wealth greater than any community in America. Very few families have less than two cars and the greatest ambition I think of the average member of the community is to be a member of the country club. I submit to you that these are the Jews whom you must capture and I submit to you that this whole body of Jewry is being completely neglected. The rabbis and the cantors are either lost in the welter of great scholarships in these ivory towers and these academies or they are lost in their great secular drives to run the Jewish secular community and no attempt aside from the halfhearted Torah lesson which is imparted in the sermon in all of fifteen minutes (because

the rabbi has to look at the clock to make sure he doesn't force the congregation to remain one minute extra) or perhaps the Torah lesson that is given on Saturday afternoon to eleven people or perhaps, not wishing to arouse the ire of the caterer who is standing in the back who wishes to begin serving the food, or perhaps, not wishing to offend the parents of the Bar Mitzvah who might make a substantial contribution to the prayer book fund I submit to you that unless you free yourselves from these tyrannies and unless you begin to teach, you the leaders of Jewish scholarship, in language that men like me understand, not in language that only you understand, I submit to you that in the next hundred years men will not be looking up to see God, they may be looking up to see where their cousin Sidney maintains a dry cleaning establishment on Venus. I submit to you that this word infinite which has been the whole key of our prayer book and of our Siddur will perhaps be a word outmoded and out of use for we are going to be living in a very finite civilization-we are doing that already. These are the problems that you the leaders of Jewish thought must give some thought to.

Hazzan Wohlberg:

Both of my colleagues, Hazzan Mendelson and Rabbi Kieval, have spoken beautifully in their own areas and I find much to agree with in what they have said. But I find myself most in agreement with what was said by Mr. Schenker (except for his theology of course, there we part company.) Let me however that when Jews prayed (I believe it was Solomon Schechter who said this) they needed only one Siddur, but now that they have stopped praying the great number of Siddurim that we have are not sufficient. When people don't pray they somehow need new Siddurim. The trouble is as the Bible says, "*Lo yachlu lishtot min hamayim ki marim hem*," they could not drink from the waters because *they* (the people themselves) are bitter. The trouble is not in the prayerbooks, the trouble is in us. We do not have an atmosphere of prayerfulness in our synagogues. Let's not blame the members. Mr. Schenker, our people do come to pray to the synagogue but he finds there that the rabbi does not pray and neither does the hazzan.

When the hazzan is concerned with a recitative that he has not fully learned and he is worried about its execution. How can we conceive that he is *davening*? And when the rabbi keeps himself busy announcing pages and breaking the thread of the prayer service that, too, does not help establish a prayerful mood. Let us forget about form. Let us pray-actually *daven*-and I believe that the people who do come to pray will pray. Let's pray!

Rabbi Kieval :

I would like to comment not so much upon what Hazzan Wohlberg has said but rather on the challenge presented by Mr. Schenker.

I am as painfully aware of the critical situation with regard to worship as I believe you or any of us is. I'm not an ivory tower man. Sometimes under the great pressure of the demands, the incessant demands of the members of my congregation, I escape into the ivory tower into the academic world. But after a few hours I go back to my congregation. And our congregation is like all other congregations. Hazzan Wohlberg is right-the people do come to pray--not everyone, not 100%.

Perhaps our community is a little different in that respect than Cedarhurst. The people do come and they want to pray and they want to learn and we mustn't forget that they want to learn. I don't know why our people come to our synagogue Sabbath after Sabbath whether there's a Bar Mitzvah or not. Naturally, we have more people when we have a Bar Mitzvah but we do have substantial numbers of regular worshippers and they're not old people who come only out of memories, either. They are intelligent people, if not intellectuals, who come because they're earnestly seeking an answer and they want to seek it together with us. I fully agree that the rabbi must fill those needs. I have spoken, I have written on this subject and I would like to summarize in a word what I say both to and about my own colleagues and to the students of the Cantors Institute.

I think that, though this is not by any means the whole solution, the first step certainly must be for both the hazzan and the rabbi to stop being performers. The virtuoso aspect, of both the rabbis and hazzans' role, is as dead as a dodo, with the exceptions, perhaps, of the great metropolitan communities where congregations expect their rabbis and cantors to be stars and to entertain the visiting crowd. We have to be teachers, primarily teachers. We must teach people how to pray by our example. If we exercise our vocal chords at services they should not be exercised in the announcing of pages (by the way, this has become the image of the rabbi-I know it from talking with our children). But to the extent that we go up in the pulpit and speak, I think we ought to teach. It is true we have to become a bit personal, sermonic at times; it is difficult to reach people otherwise. I have long ago given up preaching sermons as such because of the performance nature that they must assume. Instead, my attempt is to teach on Sabbath morning. We have greatly emphasized the reading of the Torah and it has become instead of a shorter aspect of our services a longer item on our service schedule. We have individual copies of the Hertz *humash* so that everyone can follow the reading.

But study in itself is not the need there because that only makes of the service a substitute for the lecture platform. That has its place but the synagogue is not that place. The teaching or the preaching, if the rabbis insist on preaching, should be for one purpose only: to prepare for prayer. To prepare themselves first, and then the congregation to pray.

The role of the hazzan, if I may be so presumptuous, as to explain it as I see it, is also to prepare the people

for prayer. Not to pray for them. *Sheliah tzibbur* does not mean a representative of the congregation, but rather one who prays in behalf of the congregation in such a way as to inspire the congregation to join and pray with him. That is why, though there certainly is a place for solo performance on the part of a hazzan and choir, his basic and essential function is to move the people to pray and to sing along.

Hazzan Putter-man :

I have listened most attentively to what everyone has said and I agree with all of you. You know that I give a course at the Cantors Institute entitled "Practical Hazzanut" and I tell our students that the important element which a hazzan must possess, is he must have the capacity to be able to pray, to daven. The hazzan who goes to the amid worrying about his voice, worrying how he can dynamically impress the congregation, is not fulfilling his function as a hazzan. We know that there were many great hazzanim in our era, and in the golden era as well, who did not have outstanding voices but who nevertheless magnificent outstanding voices but who nevertheless magnificently *Shlihei tzibbur*. They knew what they were talking about; they knew what they were praying about. The function of the hazzan is not that of a performer. We are not performers. Rabbi Kieval, unintentionally I am sure, referred to the hazzan's role as a "Performance." We are not on the stage-we are on the pulpit. I pray for the day to come when in the Conservative Movement hazzanim no longer will face the congregation but rather will face the Ark. And let us return to the day when we have on the *parochet* of the Ark the words *Da Lifne Mi Ata Omed* or *Shiviti Adonai L'negdi Tamid*.

I believe that this is not only up to the congregation but up to us as well. Just as there are single places in the service where the hazzan turns to face the Ark, so we can turn around for all of the service, not only for the highlights. Let us go back to prayer and not to performing.

Hazzan Nathan Mendelson

This morning we heard a very fine short talk by Rabbi Kogen in which he said that our emphasis should not be so much on *Adonai malakh* or *Adonai yimlokh* but rather *Adonai melekh*. We should concentrate not so much on the past or on the future but on the present. We want a subjective approach. We want to see and to understand that God is King. Therefore, the only answer we can give to the country club crowd that Mr. Schenker spoke about is: "Gentlemen, in your present attitude all we can give you is a sugar coated pill. Do you want a nice melody, come to the synagogue, do you want a nice simple, peaceful unprovocative talk, come to the synagogue." There would then be the dim hope that maybe a man who came for this purpose might be touched. There is a possibility that a man coming into such a synagogue will be caught up for a moment and the sugar coating will dissolve and he will get a flash of the moment of prayer. When that happens, we will have broken through a barrier.

WEDNESDAY EVENING, APRIL 19, 1961

**REMARKS OF
HAZZAN MOSES J. SILVERMAN**

President-elect of the Cantors Assembly

Mr. Chairman, Colleagues and Friends:

I am much more fortunate than President Kennedy. I will admit that while America is a going concern with excellent prospects for future growth, our President has tremendous responsibilities upon his shoulders and grave crises to meet. My Presidency has its tasks, responsibilities, and challenges, but it has its joys-no dangers, no perils. Challenges-yes, but crises, no.

Let me ^{first} speak about the tasks that lie before us and where I hope to be of service.

We need closer liaison with the various regions of the Assembly. I want and hope to visit every region this year so that they may hear first hand what is being done in New York by the Executive Council and the administration of the Cantors Assembly. In this way their questions can be answered and they can be completely up-to-date regarding Assembly activity.

We need more direct communication between the Cantors Institute and each assembly member so that every cantor of our group is intimately acquainted with our school and looks ^{upon} it as his own. The school is our future. I hope to intensify our relationship with the Cantors Institute. We have been too removed from it. This is a school of which we can all be proud. We don't know enough about it and we should visit it to see what is going on. Each Assembly member should have full information about the school and not think of it only in terms of an institution which involves fund raising. Our school needs moral support and it needs spiritual support just as much as it needs financial support. If we really come to know our school as we should, we can be more informative about it. We can then convey what we know more adequately to our congregants and the many people interested in hazzanut. If you concur with my thinking and if I can hope for your cooperation, we can bring nation wide attention and interest ^{to} the Cantors Institute since we represent cities and states all over the country.

We need closer rapport with the United Synagogue and a mutual exchange of ideas. There is no doubt that we can be of great help to each other. I am convinced that we can and will work harmoniously in our sacred field of prayer and Torah and in serving the vast American Jewish Community.

We need a full time executive director.

We need a new physical set-up with large offices and storage space so that our administrative work can be handled more efficiently and effectively. These last two items will take a lot of doing. I need not tell you of our tremendous growth these last few years. Our men are entitled to personal attention and consideration whenever and wherever a problem arises. Only an office properly staffed with our own people and a full time executive can answer these needs. I hope to bring this about in my administration, but I will need your continued loyalty and cooperation, as well as your understanding. I will do every thing in my power to see that

our offices are in keeping with the station and position of the Cantors Assembly.

These are just a few of our needs, but they are immediate, and it is in the direction of these needs that I shall labor.

I turn with gratitude to Isaac Wall, a splendid president, for the magnificent job he has done and for the outstanding pattern he has set for me.

I acknowledge my own debt, and yours to Sam Rosenbaum, a wonderful dedicated, gracious and saintly person who has been a source of inspiration and encouragement to me as he has been to you. In my term as vice president, and in my work as campaign chairman, I had many an occasion to confer with Sam. This is a man who has managed to give hours and hours of hard and conscientious work to his office at a great personal sacrifice, I am sure. There are many-so very many-who have benefitted from his wise counsel, his patience, his sense of fairness, and his understanding. Thank you, Sam, for everything. I think you know how much I am counting on you to help in the new administration.

How glad I am that Saul Meisels will be my vice president. I will depend on Saul to draw energy from his dynamic personality and his tremendous capacity for seeing things through to a successful conclusion.

How reverently we Americans speak of the founding fathers of our country-those who signed their names to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution. It is with love and reverence that I mention David Puterman who raised the central pillars of our organization. He is the founding father of the Cantors Assembly of America.

Each of our former presidents has raised the standards of our cause to an increasing higher level : Abraham Rose, Nathan Mendelson, Max Wohelberg, Charles Sudock, Samuel Rosenbaum and Isaac Wall.

In all humility, I shall attempt to emulate them.

Speaking of humility, no cantor can fail to be moved to his very depths when he stands during the solemn moment of the High Holiday Service, facing the Ark, as he begins the *Hineni*. Most of you know that this has always been one of my very favorite prayers. I have referred to it from time to time through the years in various ways. Perhaps it is one of my favorites because the prayer itself was written by a medieval cantor and points up the creative ability of the cantor Hebraically as well as musically. To me, as it is I am sure to you, the *Hineni* speaks of the very longing and yearning of my heart. What are we actually saying as we begin this prayer? We are defining the mission and service of a cantor in Israel. We are saying "Heavenly Father, to us have been given the keys to the hearts of our people." There is no heart that cannot be opened with the key of prayer and song. There is no aspect of Jewish life that is not sung. The Torah, the Prophets, our prayers, even our lamentations-all are sung. Surely, it is the Talmud that has kept our people alive all these centuries. But it was a Talmud that was sung-not spoken. Sixteen hours a day of speech and debate would have been too much for the young *Yeshiva Bachur*. It was a Gemora Ni gun that kept his soul alive. Knowing all this-knowing that all through America there are Jews who have forgotten everything but the

songs of our people--knowing that there are Jews who will go miles to hear a hazzan--all this places upon us, their hazzanim, a tremendous responsibility.

We say then *Hineni Heani* Mimaas--"Oh ,God, there are so many deeds that we can and must do to nourish this hunger for the songs of our people in the hearts of the modern generation." We can sing them the folk songs of our people, the songs of Zion, the Hassidic melodies, the *Nigunim* that will bring the hearts of our youth and people of all ages closer to Torah. This is what we have sought to do and, with God's help, will continue to do. We, and only we, have the musical treasures of our whole history to give to our people. The three concerts we have planned for this convention (two of which you have already heard) demonstrate my point most clearly.

It is the *Hineni* again which speaks of the hazzan as the *Sheliach-Tzibbur*, or messenger of the congregation. Ours is not the role of a telegraph boy who delivers a message in a sealed envelope--a message of which he has no knowledge. Do you remember the highest compliment our fathers could pay a hazzan? *Er farshtet perush hamilos* (He understands the meaning of what he sings). This did not mean mere translation. This meant he knew Torah and this is so important.

We share with our rabbis the responsibility and privilege of serving God through Torah, through knowledge, through mutual appreciation and understanding of our calling.

In the spirit of this noble prayer, these are the goals we must set for ourselves and we must go on to even greater heights. This is my hope -- this is my prayer *Boruch shomeya t'fillah*.

A CONCERT OF TRADITIONAL MUSIC FOR THE SYNAGOGUE

*Wednesday Evening, April Nineteenth, 1961
at 10 o'clock*

GROSSINGER'S
Liberty, New York

This is the second in a series of Two Concert of Music for the Synagogue. It is dedicated to that Golden Age of Synagogue composition and Hazzanic virtuosity which flourished in Eastern Europe between the mid-nineteenth century and the First World War.

Written for the Jew who was thoroughly at home in the synagogue and passionately loved its music it beautifully mirrors the intensity and devotion of Jewish life of that era.

Hazzanim, in particular, will ever be indebted to these Masters; under their impetus and inspiration Hazzanut flowered to full bloom. Even after their own glorious voices were stilled they continue to live in the works and memories they contributed to the ancient hazzanic art and tradition.

Included in this Concert are the works of some of those who, living in the New World, created in the spirit of the Old.

The participants are the hazzanim of the Choral Ensemble of the Philadelphia Regional Branch of the Cantors Assembly of America, Mr. Sholom Altman, Conductor, Mr. Lazar Weiner, Piano.

PROGRAM

Rachmone Deonei	Z. Zilberts
HAZZAN LOUIS HERMAN, <i>Soloist</i>	
<i>Beth El, Camden, N. J.</i>	
HAZZAN ISAAC WALL, <i>Soloist</i>	
<i>Har Zion, Philadelphia, Pa.</i>	
Y ehi Rotzon (Recitative)	J. Schraeter
HAZZAN ALVIN SCHRAETER	
<i>Temple Petach Tikvah, Brooklyn, N. Y.</i>	
Mogen Ovos (A Memorial Tribute)	L. Low
The Choral Ensemble	
Habet Mishomayim (Recitative)	W. Bogzester
HAZZAN MICHAEL HAMMERMAN	
<i>Kehillat Israel, Brookline, Mass.</i>	
U v'yom Simchaschem	P. Abras
HAZZAN NATHAN CHAITOVSKY, <i>Soloist</i>	
<i>Temple Sinai, Philadelphia, Pa.</i>	
HAZZAN SEYMOUR SCHWARTZMAN, <i>Soloist</i>	
<i>Beth Sholom, Philadelphia, Pa.</i>	
V'haarev Noh (Recitative)	D. Roitman
HAZZAN SHABTAI ACKERMAN	
<i>Beth Abraham, Detroit, Michigan</i>	
Omnom Ken	B. Schorr
HAZZAN KURT SILBERMANN, <i>Soloist</i>	
<i>Jewish Community Center, Norristown, Pa.</i>	
V'al Y'dei Avodecho (Recitative)	I. Alter
HAZZAN SOLOMON GISSER	
<i>Shaare Zion, Montreal, Canada</i>	
U'vchen Yiskadash	Grauman-Goldstein
The Choral Ensemble	
Eilu D'verim (Recitative)	J. Eidelson
HAZZAN JOSEPH EIDELSON	
<i>East Midwood Jewish Center, Brooklyn, N. Y.</i>	
Rochel Mivakoh al Boneho	Roitman-Binder
(Recitative)	
HAZZAN HYMAN SKY	
<i>Congregation Beth Emeth, Philadelphia, Pa.</i>	
Halleluyoh	B. Brun
Arr. G. Rabinowitz	
The Choral Ensemble Of The	
Philadelphia Regional Branch	
of the	
Cantors Assembly of America	
MR. SHALOM ALTMAN, <i>Conductor</i>	
MR. LAZAR WEINER, <i>Piano</i>	
HAZZANIM :	
Philip Blackman	Andrew Salzer
Nathan Chaitovsky	Sidney Scharff
Felix Fogelman	Seymour Schwartzman
Louis Goldhirsch	Kurt Silbermann
Louis Herman	Hyman Sky
Sidney Karpo	Pinchas Spiro
Yehudah Mandel	Isaac Wall
Asher Mandelblatt	Harry Weinberg
Martin Purjes	Marshall Wolkenstein
Mr. Jacob Perlberg, <i>Assisting Artist</i>	

KAVOD AWARDS

The Cantors Assembly's Second Annual "Kavod Awards" were presented to the following for their outstanding contributions to the music of the American synagogue :

HAZZAN ABBA WEISGAL in recognition of over three decades of service to his congregation, Chizuk Amuna of Baltimore, Maryland as hazzan, teacher and composer.

RABBI SAMUEL GOLDFARB in recognition of his pioneering achievements in the field of congregational melodies for the American synagogue.

HAZZAN MOSHE NATHANSON in recognition of the leadership he has displayed over the years in introducing and in perpetuating the songs of Israel in America.

THURSDAY, APRIL 20, 1961

CLOSING PRAYER

Hazzan Abba Weisgal

Chizuk Amunah, *Baltimore, Md.*

As we approach the close of this Convention where the main topics have been t'fillah shirah vezimrah I feel it appropriate to quote from *Holin* :

Havivim Yisrael lifne Hakadosh Barukh Hu yoter mimalakhai hasharet — en malakhai hasharet omrim shirah limaaloh ad sheyomry “Yisrael limatah.

"Beloved is Israel unto the Holy One, blessed be He, more than the ministering angels. For the ministering angels may not utter song in the heavenly spheres until Israel utters song first in the world below." This im-

plies that *we, the sh'lihay tzibbur*, are the actual representatives of Israel in *Shirah*.

According to the *Gemara* we are given an important position in the Hierarchy of song. Even the ministering angels may not utter *Shirah* until we say *Shirah*. The responsibility placed upon us is very great. Let us remember when we say *Shira: Da lifney mi ata omed.*

There is still another appropriate quotation from *Brakhot : Amar Rabi Helbo: Mishmar hayotzeh omer el mishmar hanikhnas* : "Mi sheshiken et shmo babayit hazehe Hu yishaken baynaykhem ahavah v'ahvah v'shalom v'rayut.

"The Guardians who leave the Temple say to the incoming guards : "May He who has placed his name upon this House cause love, brotherhood, peace and friendship to dwell among you."

We now have a new administration. May I extend to the new administration the blessings of *ahavah v'ahvah v'shalom v'ragut*. May we all be privileged to gather together again next year and become the *mishmar hanikhnas* once again with the addition of new and fresh forces. May it be God's will that we hazzanim shall feel for one another and have in our hearts the true spirit of *ahavah v'ahvah v'shalom v'rayut.*

Since we are the chosen in Israel to say *Shirah* I conclude this prayer with a few bars of *t'fillah*.

Maron divishmaya yehay bisaadikhon kol zman v'idan.

May the Lord of Heaven be your help at all times and at all seasons.

Hashem oz l'amo yiten Hashem y'varekh et amo vshalom.

May the Lord give strength unto His people. May the Lord bless His people with peace. Amen.

MEMBERS OF THE CANTORS ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA

Abrams, Emanuel	Chicago, Ill.	Davidson, Charles S.	Wantagh, N. Y.
Ackerman, Shabtai	Detroit, Mich.	DeBruin, Gerald	Buffalo, N. Y.
Allen, Bertram T.	Racine, Wisc.	Denburg, Abraham J.	Akron, Ohio
Altman, Harry	Freeport, L. I., N. Y.	Deutsch, Abraham	Vancouver, Canada
Amdur, Joseph	Mt. Vernon, N. Y.	Domowitz, Simon	Peekskill, N. Y.
Amsel, Morris	Minneapolis, Minn.	Dubrow, Samuel T.	Cedarhurst, N. Y.
Aranow, Louis	Los Angeles, Calif.	Edelstein, Leopold	Perth Amboy, N. J.
Ashery, Irving	Philadelphia, Pa.	Edgar, Aaron I.	Omaha, Nebraska
Avirom, Morris	Nutley, N. J.	Edgar, Raphael	Washington, D. C.
Balaban, Asher	Wilkes Barre, Pa.	Eidelson, Joseph	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Barkan, Emanuel	San Antonio, Texas	Engelhardt, Charles	Chicago, Illinois
Barkin, Jacob	Pittsburg, Pa.	Ephros, Gershon	Flushing, N. Y.
Bashkowitz, Saul E.	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Erlbaum, Ruben	Oak Park, Mich.
Beidner, Aaron	Norwich, Conn.	Etra, Melvin	Bronx, N. Y.
Belfer, Ben William	Rockville Centre, N. Y.	Ezring, Abraham J.	Rock Island, Illinois
Bennett, Leon G.	Van Nuys, California	Farkas, Joseph L.	Chicago, Illinois
Berkovits, Gabriel	Montreal, Canada	Feder, Herbert	New Haven, Conn.
Berman, Edward W.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Feder, Max	San Francisco, California
Bermanis, Simon	Detroit, Mich.	Feifel, Herman	Brookline, Mass.
Bernstein, Akiba	Toronto, Canada	Feinerman, Mordecai	East Rockaway, N. Y.
Bernstein, Eleazar	New London, Conn.	Feller, Irving S.	Trenton, N. J.
Beyo, Maurice	Freeport, N. Y.	Fenakel, Nicholas	Detroit, Michigan
Birnbaum, Frank	New Orleans, La.	Fisher, Merrill	Melrose Park, Pa.
Blackman, Julius A.	San Francisco, Cal.	Fogel, Mendel	Montreal, Canada
Blackman, Philip	Philadelphia, Pa.	Fogelman, Felix	Philadelphia, Pa.
Bloch, Charles B.	Flushing, N. Y.	Foreman, Milton S.	Chicago, Ill.
Botoshansky, Mario	Bronx, N. Y.	Frankel, Reuven	Detroit, Mich.
Brandhandler, David	Chicago, Illinois	Frankel, Joseph	Seattle, Washington
Breitbart, Israel M.	New Britain, Conn.	Freedland, Charles	McKeesport, Pa.
Brindell, Harold	Chicago, Illinois	Freedman, Milton	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Brockman, Harry	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Fried, Henry	Orange, N. J.
Brodacz, Abram	Meridan, Conn.	Friedman, Abraham	New York, N. Y.
Brodsky, David	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Garfinkel, Jonas	Chester, Pa.
Brownstone, Benjamin	Winnipeg, Canada	Gartner, Fred S.	Bellingham, Washington
Carus, Paul P.	East Meadow, N. Y.	Gerlich, Marcus	Fall River, Mass.
Chaitovsky, Nathan L.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Gewirtz, Norman	Bay Shore, N. Y.
Chandler, Sheldon H.	Malden, Mass.	Gewirz, Paul S.	Skokie, Ill.
Cohen, Jordan H.	Highland Park Illinois	Ginsburg, W. Belskin	Philadelphia, Pa.
Cohen, D. Tevele	Chicago, Illinois	Gisser, Hyman	Montreal, Canada
Cycowski, Josef	San Francisco, California	Gisser, Solomon	Montreal, Canada
Dainow, Simcha	Yonkers, N. Y.	Glantz, Leib	Tel Aviv, Israel

Glass, Myro	Indianapolis, Ind.	Kane, David J.	Monterey Park, Cal.
Glueck, William	Jackson Heights, N. Y.	Kantor, Abraham	Venice, Calif.
Glusman, Bernard	Nashville, Tenn.	Kaplan, Abraham	Chelsea, Mass.
Gold, Leon	Mattapan, Mass.	Karpo, Sidney	Yeadon, Pa.
Goldberg, Maurice	Chicago, Illinois	Karsch, Jacob	K'far Harosh, Israel
Goldberger, Eugene	Montreal, Canada	Katz, Maurice	West Hempstead, N. Y.
Goldhirsh, Louis D.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Katzman, Nathan D.	Hollywood, Calif.
Goodfriend, Isaac	Cleveland Heights, Ohio	Kavon, Paul	New York N. Y.
Gowseiow, Jacob	St. Louis, Missouri	Kinnory, Herman	Las Vegas, Nevada
Greenberg, Todros	Chicago, Ill.	Kirschenbaum, Saul	Ventnor, N. J.
Greenfield, Morris	Long Beach, Calif.	Kirshner, Philip S.	San Diego, Cal.
Greengarten, David	Downsview, Ontario, Can.	Kishel, Irving	Milton, Mass.
Griver, Noah	Youngstown, Ohio	Klein, Edward	N. Miami Beach, Fla.
Grob, Paul	Portsmouth, Va.	Kleinberg, Jacob S.	Laurelton, N. Y.
Gross, Irving I.	Cincinnati, Ohio	Klonsky, Ben jamin	Reading, Pa.
Gross, Irving	Plainfield, N. J.	Koret, Arthur Solomon	Hartford, Conn.
Grossman, Raphael	Glen Cove, N. Y.	Kriegsman, Simon E.	Camden, N. J.
Grunberger, David E.	Warren, Ohio	Krohn, Philip S.	Philadelphia, Pa.
Gudovitz Charles S.	Buffalo, N. Y.	Kula, Morton	Roslyn Hts., N. Y.
Guttmann, Isaiah	Richmond Hill, N. Y.	Kusevitscly, David	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Halevy, Nathaniel	Calgary, Canada	Lang, Morris	Williamsport, Pa.
Hammer-man, Herman	Los Angeles, Calif.	Lengyel, Josef	Tampa, Fla.
Hammerman, Michael	Brookline, Mass.	Leon, David	Bridgeport, Conn.
Hammerman, Saul Z.	Baltimore, Md.	Lerner, Harold	Syracuse, N. Y.
Hauben, William	Los Angeles, Cal.	Levine, Elliot C.	Montclair, N. J.
Harris, Herbert	Riverdale N. Y.	Levine, Joseph	Baltimore, Md.
Hearst, Henry	Swampscott, Mass.	Levinson, Morris	Maplewood, N. J.
Heilbraun, Yehudah	Hollywood, Fla.	Levinson, Nathan	Philadelphia, Pa.
Heiser, Mordecai	Pittsburgh, Pa.	Lifton, Gerry	(out of country)
Herman, Louis	Camden, N. J.	Lind, Joshua	Chicago, Illinois
Herman, Henry	Spring Valley, N. Y.	Lind, Murray J.	Chicago, Illinois
Hiesiger, David	No. Bellmore, L. I.	Lipp, Sigmund	New Bedford, Mass.
Hochberg, Gabriel	Newton Centre, Mass.	Lipson, William W.	Miami, Fla.
Hohenemser, Jacob	Providence, R. I.	Lowy, Morris	Forest Hills, N. Y.
Holzer, Eugene Y.	Savannah, Georgia	Lubin, Abraham	Dayton, Ohio
Horn, William	Scranton, Pa.	Lubow, Harry J.	Swampscott, Mass.
Horowitz, Aaron	Wilkes Barre, Pa.	Mandel, Yehudah L.	Philadelphia, Pa.
Jacoby, Victor	Freeport, N. Y.	Mandelblatt, Asher	Philadelphia, Pa.
Kalib, Sholom	Chicago, Ill.		
Kandler, Simon	Chestnut Hill, Mass.		

Mann, Aaron	Mobile, Ala.	Reiseman, Abraham	Miami Beach, Fla.
Marantz, Philip	Chicago Ill.	Renzer, Jacob	St. Louis, Mo.
Margulies, Solomon	Jamaica, N. Y.	Reznik, David	Philadelphia, Pa.
Martin, Stanley	Northbrook, 111.	Rontal, Moses	Chicago, Ill.
Marton, Abraham	Jacksonville, Fla.	Rose, Abraham	Elgin, Ill.
Matlin, Bernard	Norfolk, Va.	Rosen, Louis	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Meisels, Saul	Cleveland Hghts., Ohio	Rosen, Yechiel	New York, N. Y.
Mendelson, Nathan	Montreal, Canada	Rosenbaum, Samuel	Rochester, N. Y.
Mendelson, Solomon	Long Beach, N. Y.	Rosenzweig, Joshua	Montreal, Canada
Messerschmidt, Kurt	Portland, Maine	Rothblatt, Jacob	Kansas City, Mo.
Michelson, Allan	N. Hollywood, Calif.	Rubin, Max	Rochester, N. Y.
Migdal, Norman	Seattle, Washington	Rubin, William	White Plains, N. Y.
Miller, Julian K.	El Cajon, Calif.	Sachs, Arthur A.	Morristown, N. J.
Mills, Edgar	Newark, N. J.	Sack, Israel	Tampa, Fla.
Morginstin, Samuel	Bloomfield, N. J.	Sadowsky, Sol	Far Rockaway, N. Y.
Moses, Tibor	Pasadena, Calif.	Salkov, Abraham	Baltimore, Md.
Naimark, Abraham	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Salzer, Andrew	Wilmington, Del.
Nathanson, Moshe	New York, N. Y.	Salzman, Joseph	Miami, Florida
Nelson, Sholom	Flushing, N. Y.	Sanders, Sol.	Bayside, N. Y.
Nederland, Paul	Utica, N. Y.	Sauler, William	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Nosowsky, Gerson	St. Paul, Minn.	Savitt, Marvin	Westbury, N. Y.
Of seyer, Jordan	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Scharff, Sidney	Red Bank, N. J.
Okun, Morris	Richmond, Va.	Schindler, Albert	Cleveland, Ohio
Olkenitzky, Elija	Silver Springs, Md.	Schorr, Morris	Elizabeth, N. J.
Oppenheim, Mordecai S,	Toronto, Canada	Schraeter, Alvin	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Orbach, Moshe	Harrisburg, Pa.	Schraeter, Arnold	Manhattan Beach, N. Y.
Osen, David	Teaneck, N. J.	Schreier, Irving	Fall River, Mass.
Ostrovsky, Akiva	Birmingham, Alabama	Schwartzman, Joseph	Atlanta, Ga.
Paskin, Harry J.	Philadelphia, Pa.	Schwartzman, Seymour	Elkins Park, Penna.
Perlman, Ivan	Des Moines, Ia.	Schwarzmer, David	Mount Vernon, N. Y.
Perman, Norman	Witchita, Kansas	Schwimmer, Moses	Chicago, Ill.
Pernick, Morris	Louisville, Ky.	Segal, Robert H.	New York, N. Y.
Pinsky, Irving	Waterbury, Conn.	Seidelman, Samuel	Hempstead, N. Y.
Plitnick, Sherwood	Paterson, N. J.	Shames, Morton	Springfield, Mass.
Postolow, Samuel	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Shanok, Morton	Lynn, Mass.
Purjes, Moshe	Flushing, N. Y.	Shapiro, Abraham	Union, N. J.
Puterman, David J.	New York, N. Y.	Shapiro, Abraham B.	Lynbrook, N. Y.
Rabinovitz, Pinchos	Chicago, Illinois	Shapiro, Robert	Charlotte, N. C.
Rabinowitz, Abraham	White Plains, N. Y.	Sheinfeld, Gedalia	Philadelphia, Pa.
Rabinowitz, Sidney G.	Brockton, Mass.	Shelinsky, Louis Z.	Chicago, Ill.
		Shelkan, Gregor	Boston, Mass.

Sherer, Rubin	Allentown, Pa.	U rstein, Carl	Los Angeles, Calif.
Siegel, Benjamin	Great Neck, N. Y.	Verall, Orland	Winnipeg, Canada
Siegel, Morris	Easton, Pa.	Wachs, Saul	Columbus, Ohio
Silberberg, Bezalel	St. John, N. Brunsw. Can.	Wagner, George	Houston, Texas
Silbermann, Kurt	Norristown, Pa.	Wagshall, Samuel	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Silensky, Abraham	Dallas, Texas	Wahrman, Henry	Toronto, Canada
Siller, Saul	Brooklyn, N. Y.	Wahrman, Jacob	Baltimore, Md.
Silverman, David	Tulsa, Oklahoma	Wall, Isaac	Philadelphia, Pa.
Silverman, David I.	Minneapolis, Minn.	Wechsler, Sol	Norfolk, Va.
Silverman, Moses J.	Chicago, Ill.	Weinberg, Harry	Philadelphia, Pa.
Siskin, Hyman	Norwalk, Conn.	Weinberg, Vittorio	Flushing, N. Y.
Sky, Hyman	Philadelphia, Pa.	Weintraub, David	New York, N. Y.
Sonenklar, Jacob	Detroit, Mich.	Weisgal, Adolph J.	Baltimore, Md
Spanglet, Jacob	Toledo, Ohio	Weiss, Samuel J.	Washington, D. C.
Spiro, Pinchas	Los Angeles, Cal.	Wieselman, Joseph	Duluth, Minn.
Steiner, Ernest	Pottsville, Pa.	Wohlberg, Max	Malverne, L. I., N. Y.
Sternberg, Ralph	New York, N. Y.	Wolf, David	Far Rockaway, N. Y.
Sternberg, Solomon	Huntington Sta., N. Y.	Yolkoff, Arthur	Portland, Oregon
Sudock, Charles	Long Beach, Cal.	Zalkin, Robert	Indianapolis, Ind.
Surlin, George	Chicago, Ill.	Zimmerman, Israel	Lincoln, Neb.
Tabatsky, Israel	Burlington, Vt.	Zuckerberg, Israel	Brooklyn, N. Y.
Taube, Moshe	New York, N. Y.	Zupnik, Andor	Chicago, Illinois
Teichman, Louis	Silver Springs Maryland	Zymelman, Manuel	Allston, Mass.
Ulman, Julius	Toledo, Ohio		

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